00056672

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

Digitized with financial assistance from
Hemendra Kothari
on 06 November, 2019

ENCHANTED INDIA

BY

PRINCE BOJIDAR KARAGEORGEVITCH

56672

LONDON AND NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS
45, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1899

*** *"Enchanted India," which was written in French by Prince Bojidar Karageorgevitch, and translated by Clara Bell, is now published in advance of the edition in the original language.*

00056672

TO MY FRIEND

M. H. SPIELMANN

CONTENTS

	PAGE
At Sea	1, 305
Bombay	3, 91, 302
Ellora	36
Nandgaun	46
Baroda	50
Ahmedabad	55
Palitana	64
Bhawnagar	84
Hyderabad	92
Trichinopoly	107
Madura	114
Tuticorin	123
Colombo	123
Kandy	125
Madras	133
Calcutta	139
Darjeeling	145
Benares	154
Allahabad	181
Lucknow	185
Cawnpore	189

PAGE

GWALIOR 199
AGRA 204
JEYPOOR 213
DELHI 216, 299
AMRITSUR 233
LAHORE 235
RAWAL PINDI 238
PESHAWUR 241
MURREE 253
GARHI 254
SRINAGAR 256
RAMPOOR 266
DOMEL 269
DERWAL 271
KOHAT 273, 287
BUNNOO 274
DEHRA DOON 289
HARDWAR 296

ENCHANTED INDIA

AT SEA

THE air is heavy with indefinable perfume. We are already coasting the Indian shore, but it remains invisible, and gives no sign but by these gusts of warmer air laden with that inscrutable aroma of musk and pepper. A lighthouse to port, which we have for some time taken for a star, vanishes in the light mist that hangs over the coast, and then again there is nothing but the immensity of waters under the clear night, blue with moonlight.

All the day long a quantity of medusæ have surrounded the ship: white, as large as an ostrich's egg, with a pink or lilac heart, like a flower; others of enormous size, of a paler blue than the sea, fringed

with intense and luminous green—a splash of light on the dusk of the deep. Others, again, white, blossoming with every shade of rose and violet. Then, towards evening, myriads of very small ones, thickening the water, give it a yellowish tinge, clinging to the ship's side, rolling in the furrow of its wake, a compact swarm, for hours constantly renewed; but they have at last disappeared, leaving the sea clear, transparent, twinkling with large flecks of phosphorescence that rise slowly from the depths, flash on the surface, and die out at once under the light of the sky.

Before daybreak, in the doubtful light of waning night, dim masses are visible—grey and purple mountains—mountains shaped like temples, of which two indeed seem to be crowned with low squat towers as if unfinished.

The morning mist shrouds everything; the scene insensibly passes through a series of pale tints, to reappear ere long in the clear rosy light, which sheds a powdering of glowing gold on the broad roadstead of Bombay.

But the enchantment of this rose-tinted land, vibrating in the sunshine, is evanescent. The city

comes into view in huge white masses—docks, and factories with tall chimneys; and coco-palms, in long lines of monotonous growth, overshadow square houses devoid of style.

As we go nearer, gothic towers are distinguishable among the buildings—faint reminiscences of Chester, clumsily revived under the burning light of white Asia.

BOMBAY

In the spacious harbour, where a whole fleet of steamships lies at anchor, a swarm of decked boats are moving about, sober in colour, with the bows raised very high in a long peak, and immense narrow sails crossed like a pair of scissors, and resembling a seagull's wings.

The noise in the dock is maddening. The Customs, the police, the health-officers, all mob the voyager with undreamed-of formalities, such as a paper to be signed declaring that he has but one watch and one scarf-pin, and that their value is in proportion to the wearer's fortune. Then, again, the dispersal of the luggage, which must be fished out at another spot amid the yelling horde of coolies who rush at

the trunks and use the portmanteaus as missiles, till at last we are in the street.

Under the blinding sunshine reflected from the whitewashed houses, an incredibly mixed crowd, squeezed against the railings of the custom-house wharf, stands staring at the new arrivals. Natives, naked but for a narrow loin-cloth rolled about their hips; Parsees in long white tunics, tight white trousers, and on their heads hideous low square caps of dark wax-cloth, pursuing the stranger with offers of money-changing; Hindoos, clad in thin bright silk, and rolls of light-hued muslin on their head; English soldiers, in white helmets, two of whom stare at me fixedly, and exclaim that, "By Jo', Eddy has missed this steamer!"

There are closed carriages, victorias, vehicles with a red canopy drawn by oxen, the shafts set at an angle. The drivers bawl, shout to the porters, fight for the fare with their whips, while, overhead, kites and hawks wheel incessantly, uttering a plaintive cry.

Along the roads of beaten earth, between tall plastered houses, a tramway runs. In the shop-fronts the motley display suggests a curiosity shop, and the goods have a look of antiquity under the thick layer of dust that lies on everything. It is

only in the heart of the city, in the "Fort," that the shops and houses have a European stamp.

Opposite the hotel, beyond the tennis club, is a sort of no-man's-land, where carriages are housed under tents. Natives dust and wash and wipe down the carriages in the sun, which is already very hot; and the work done, and the carriages under cover, out come swarms of little darkies, like ants, who squall and run about among the tents till sunset.

Further off, under the banyan trees, is the sepoys' camp; they have been turned out of barracks on account of the plague; and flashing here and there among the dark, heavy verdure there lies the steely level of motionless ocean.

In the English quarter of Bombay the houses are European: Government House, the post office, the municipal buildings—perfect palaces surrounded by gardens; and close by, straw sheds sheltering buffaloes, or tents squatted down on common land; and beyond the paved walks are beaten earth and huge heaps of filth, over which hover the birds of prey and the crows.

A large building of red and white stone, with spacious arcades and a central dome, as vast as a cathedral, stands at the angle of two avenues—the

railway terminus; and a great market of iron and glass—Crawford Market. Here are mountains of fruit, greenery, and vegetables of every colour and every shade of lustre; and a flower garden divides the various market sheds, where little bronze coolies, in white, scarcely clad, sell oranges and limes.

At the end of the garden are the bird sellers, their little cages packed full of parrots, minahs, and bulbuls; and tiny finches, scarcely larger than butterflies, hang on the boughs of ebony trees and daturas in bloom.

In the native town the houses are lower and closer together, without gardens between. Down the narrow streets, between booths and shops, with here and there a white mosque where gay-coloured figures are worshipping, or polychrome temples where bonzes are drumming on deafening gongs, run tramways, teams of oxen, whose drivers shriek and shout, and hackney cabs, jingling and rattling. Among the vehicles there moves a compact crowd of every race and every colour: tall Afghans, in dingy white garments, leading Persian horses by the bridle for sale, and crying out the price; bustling Parsees; naked Somalis, their heads shaven and their

oiled black skins reeking of a sickening mixture of lotus and pepper; fakirs, with wild, unkempt hair, their faces and bodies bedaubed with saffron and the thread of the "second birth" across their bare breast; Burmese, with yellow skins and long eyes, dressed in silks of the brightest pink; Mongolians, in dark-hued satin tunics embroidered with showy colours and gold thread.

There are women, too, in the throng of men, but fewer in number. Parsee ladies, draped in light sarees of pale-hued muslin bordered with black, which shroud them entirely, being drawn closely over the narrow skirt, crossed several times over the bosom, and thrown over the right shoulder to cover the head and fall lightly on the left shoulder. Hindoo women, scarcely clothed in red stuff, faded in places to a strong pink; a very skimpy bodice, the *chol*, embroidered with silk and spangles, covers the bust, leaving the arms and bosom free; a piece of thin cotton stuff, drawn round the legs and twisted about the waist, covers the shoulders and head, like a shawl. On their wrists and ankles are silver bangles; they have rings on their fingers and toes, broad necklaces with pendants, earrings, and a sort of stud of gold or copper, with coloured stones, through the left nostril. They go barefoot, pliant

forms avoiding the jostling of the crowd, and carrying on their head a pile of copper pots one above another, shining like gold, and scarcely held by one slender arm with its bangles glittering in the sun. The tinkle of the *nanparas* on their ankles keeps time with their swinging and infinitely graceful gait, and a scent of jasmine and sandal-wood is wafted from their light raiment. Moslem women, wrapped from head to foot in sacks of thick white calico, with a muslin blind over their eyes, toddle awkwardly one behind the other, generally two or three together. Native children beg, pursuing the passenger under the very feet of the horses; their sharp voices louder than the hubbub of shouts, bells, and gongs, which exhausts and stultifies, and finally intoxicates the brain.

Everything seems fused in a haze under the sun, as it grows hotter and hotter, and in that quivering atmosphere looks like a mass in which red and white predominate, with the persistent harmony of motion of the swaying, barefooted crowd.

The air is redolent of musk, sandal-wood, jasmine, and the acrid smell of the hookahs smoked by placid old men sitting in the shadow of their doors.

The ground here and there is stained with large pink patches of a disinfectant, smelling of chlorine,

strewn in front of the house where anyone lies dead. And this of itself is enough to recall to mind the spectre of the plague that is decimating Bombay; in this excitement, this turmoil of colour and noise, we had forgotten it.

Shops of the same trade are found in rows; carpenters joining their blocks, and workmen carving ornaments with very simple tools—clumsy tools—which they use with little, timid, persistent taps. Further on, coppersmiths are hammering the little pots which are to be seen in everybody's hands; under the shade of an awning stretched over the tiny booth, the finished vessels, piled up to the roof, shed a glory over the half-naked toilers who bend over their anvils, perpetually making jars of a traditional pattern, used for ablutions. There are two men at work in each shop, three at most, and sometimes an old man who sits smoking with half-closed eyes.

In a very quiet little alley, fragrant of sandal-wood, men may be seen in open stalls printing patterns with primitive wooden stamps, always the same, on very thin silk, which shrinks into a twisted cord reduced to nothing when it is stretched out to dry.

Here are carvers of painted wooden toys—red

and green dolls, wooden balls, nests of little boxes in varied and vivid colours.

Far away, at the end of the bazaar, in a street where no one passes, are the shoemakers' booths littered with leather parings; old cases or petroleum tins serve as seats. Among the workmen swarm children in rags, pelting each other with slippers.

And, quite unexpectedly, as we turned a corner beyond the coppersmiths' alley, we came on a row of tea-shops, displaying huge and burly china jars. Chinamen, in black or blue, sat at the shop doors in wide, stiff armchairs, their fine, plaited pigtail hanging over the back, while they awaited a customer with a good-humoured expression of dull indifference.

After breakfast a party of jugglers appeared in front of the hotel; they performed on a little carpet spread under the shade of a banyan tree. Acrobatic tricks first, human ladders, feats of strength; then nutmegs were made to vanish and reappear; and finally they conjured away each other in turn, in little square hampers that they stabbed with knives to prove that there was nobody inside;

and to divert the spectators' attention at critical moments they beat a tom-tom and played a shrill sort of bagpipe.

The jugglers being gone, a boy, to gain alms, opened a round basket he was carrying, and up rose a serpent, its hood raised in anger, and hissing with its tongue out.

After him came another little Hindoo, dragging a mongoose, very like a large weasel with a fox's tail. He took a snake out of a bag, and a battle began between the two brutes, each biting with all its might; the sharp teeth of the mongoose tried to seize the snake's head, and the reptile curled round the mongoose's body to bite under the fur. At last the mongoose crushed the serpent's head with a fierce nip, and instantly a hawk flew down from a tree and snatched away the victim.

By noon, under the torrid blaze which takes the colour out of everything, exhaustion overpowers the city. Vehicles are rare; a few foot-passengers try to find a narrow line of shade close to the houses, and silence weighs on everything, broken only by the buzzing of flies, the strident croak of birds of prey.

Along Back Bay lies the Malabar Hill, a promontory where the fashionable world resides in bungalows built in the midst of gardens. Palm trees spread their crowns above the road, and on the rocks which overhang the path ferns of many kinds are grown by constant watering. The bungalows, square houses of only one storey, surrounded by wide verandahs, and covered in with a high, pointed roof, which allows the air to circulate above the ceilings, stand amid clumps of bougainvillea and flowering jasmine, and the columnar trunks of coco-palms, date trees, baobabs and areca palms, which refresh them with shade.

The gardens are overgrown with exuberant tropical vegetation: orchids, daturas hung with their scented purple bells, gardenias and creepers; and yet what the brother of a London friend, on whom I am calling, shows me with the greatest pride, are a few precious geraniums, two real violets, and a tiny patch of thickly-grown lawn of emerald hue.

Colaba is the port; the docks, with tall houses between the enormous warehouses. The silence is appalling; windows, doors—all are closed. Only a few coolies hurry by in the white sunshine, with

handkerchiefs over their mouths to protect them against the infection in these streets, whence came the plague which stole at first through the suburbs, nearer and nearer to the heart of the city, driving the maddened populace before it.

One morning a quantity of dead rats were found lying on the ground; next some pigeons and fowls. Then a man died of a strange malady—an unknown disease, and then others, before it was known that they were even ill. A little fever, a little swelling under the arm, or in the throat, or on the groin—and in forty-eight hours the patient was dead. The mysterious disease spread and increased; every day the victims were more and more numerous; an occult and treacherous evil, come none knew whence. At first it was attributed to some dates imported from Syria, to some corn brought from up-country; the dates were destroyed, the corn thrown into the sea, but the scourge went on and increased, heralded by terror and woe.

At Mazagoon, one of the suburbs of Bombay, behold a Parsee wedding.

The bridegroom sits awaiting his guests, in his garden all decorated with arches and arbours, and

starred with white lanterns. An orchestra is playing, hidden in a shrubbery.

Presently all the company is assembled, robed in long white tunics. The bridegroom, likewise dressed in white, has a chain of flowers round his neck; orchids, lilies, and jasmine, falling to his waist. In one hand he holds a bouquet of white flowers, in the other a coco-nut. A shawl, neatly folded, hangs over one arm.

Over the gate and the door of the house light garlands, made of single flowers threaded like beads, swing in the breeze and scent the air.

Servants carrying large trays offer the company certain strange little green parcels: a betel-leaf screwed into a cone and fastened with a clove, containing a mixture of spices and lime, to be chewed after dinner to digest the mass of food you may see spread out in the tables in the dining-room.

Then follow more trays with tufts of jasmine stuck into the heart of a pink rose; and as the guest takes one of these bouquets the servant sprinkles first the flowers and then him with rose-water.

Shortly before sunset the *dastour* arrives — the high priest—in white, with a white muslin turban

instead of the wax-cloth cap worn by other Parsees.

The crimson sky seen above the tall coco-palms turns to pink, to pale, vaporous blue, to a warm grey that rapidly dies away, and almost suddenly it is night.

Then an elder of the family deliberately lights the first fire — a lamp hanging in the vestibule; and as soon as they see the flame the High Dastour and all those present bow in adoration with clasped hands. The bridegroom and the priest go into the house and have their hands and faces washed; then, preceded by the band and followed by all the guests, they proceed to the home of the bride.

There, again, they all sit down in the garden. The same little packets of betel, only wrapped in gold leaf, are offered to the company, and bunches of chrysanthemum sprinkled with scent.

Then, two and two, carrying on their shoulders heavy trays piled with presents, women mount the steps of the house, the bridegroom standing at the bottom. The bride's mother comes forth to meet them in a dress of pale-coloured China crape covered with a fine white saree. She waves her closed hand three times over the gifts, and then, opening it, throws rice on the ground. This action

she repeats with sugar and sweetmeats, and finally with a coco-nut. And each time she empties her hand a naked boy appears from heaven knows where, gathers up what she flings on the ground, and vanishes again, lost at once in the shadows of the garden.

At last the bridegroom goes up the steps. The mother-in-law repeats the circular wave of welcome over the young man's head with rice and sugar and an egg and a coco-nut; then she takes the garland, already somewhat faded, from his neck, and replaces it by another twined of gold thread and jasmine flowers, with roses at regular intervals. She also changes his bouquet, and receives the coco-nut her son-in-law has carried in his hand.

In the midst of a large room crowded with women in light-hued sarees, the bridegroom takes his seat between two tables, on which are large trays of rice. Facing him is a chair, and one is occupied by the bride, who is brought in by a party of girls. She is scarcely fourteen, all in white; on her head is a veil of invisibly fine muslin ten folds thick; it enfolds her in innocence, and is crowned with sprays of myrtle blossom.

The ceremony now begins. The dastour chants his prayers, throwing handfuls of rice all the time

over the young couple. A sheet is held up between the two, and a priest twines a thread about the chair. At the seventh turn the sheet is snatched away, and the bride and bridegroom, with a burst of laughter, fling a handful of rice at each other.

All the guests press forward, ceasing their conversation, which has sometimes drowned the voice of the dastour, to ask which of the two threw the rice first—a very important question it would seem.

The two chairs are now placed side by side, and the priest goes on chanting his prayers to a slow measure, in a nasal voice that is soon lost again in the chatter of the bystanders. Rice is once more shed over the couple, and incense is burnt in a large bronze vessel, the perfume mingling with that of the jasmine wreaths on the walls.

Then the procession, with music, makes its way back to the bridegroom's house. On the threshold the priest says one more short prayer over the bowed heads of the newly-married couple, and at last the whole party go into the room, where the guests take their places at the long tables.

Under each plate, a large square cut out of a banana leaf serves as a finger-napkin. Innumerable are the dishes of sweetmeats made with *ghee* (clarified butter), the scented ices, the highly-coloured

bonbons; while the young couple walk round the rooms, and hang garlands of flowers about the necks of the feasters.)

Outside the night is moonless, deep blue. Venus seems quite close to us, shining with intense brightness, and the jasmines scent the air, softly lighted by the lanterns which burn out one by one.

In the evening, at the railway terminus, there was a crush of coolies packed close up to the ticket-office of the third-class, and holding out their money. Never tired of trying to push to the front, they all shouted at once, raising their hands high in the air and holding in their finger-tips one or two shining silver rupees. Those who at last succeeded in getting tickets slipped out of the crowd, and sang and danced; others who had found it absolutely impossible to get anything retired into corners, and groaned aloud.

In the middle of the station groups of women and children squatted on the flagstones, their little bundles about them of red and white rags, and copper pots looking like gold; a huddled heap of misery, in this enormous hall of palatial proportions, handsomely decorated with sculptured marble.

They were all flying from the plague, which was spreading, and emptying the bazaars and workshops. The Exchange being closed, trade was at a standstill, and the poor creatures who were spared by the pestilence were in danger of dying of hunger.

When the gate to the platform was opened there was a stampede, a fearful rush to the train; then the cars, once filled, were immediately shut on the noisy glee of those who were going.

At the last moment some porters, preceded by two sowars in uniform and holding pikes, bore a large palankin, hermetically closed, to the door of a first-class carriage, and softly set it down. The carriage was opened for a moment: I could see within a party of women-servants, shrouded in white muslin, who were preparing a couch. An old negress handed out to the porters a large sheet, which they held over the palankin, supporting it in such a way as to make a covered passage screening the carriage door. There was a little bustle under the sheet—the end was drawn in, and the sheet fell over the closed door.

The last train gone, all round the station there was quite a camp of luckless natives lying on the ground, wrapped in white cotton, and sleeping under the stars, so as to be nearer to-morrow to the train

which, perhaps, might carry them away from the plague-stricken city.

In a long narrow bark, with a pointed white sail —a bunder-boat—we crossed the roads to Elephanta, the isle of sacred temples. Naked men, with no garment but the *langouti*, or loin-cloth, navigated the boat. They climbed to the top of the mast, clinging to the shrouds with their toes, if the least end of rope was out of gear, hauled the sail up and down for no reason at all, and toiled ridiculously, with a vain expenditure of cries and action, under the glaring sky that poured down on us like hot lead.

After an hour's passage we reached the island, which is thickly planted with fine large trees.

A flight of regular steps, hewn in the rock, under the shade of banyans and bamboos, all tangled with flowering creepers, leads straight up to the temple. It is a vast hall, dug out of granite and supported by massive columns, with capitals of a half-flattened spheroidal shape—columns which, seen near, seem far too slender to support the immense mass of the mountain that rises sheer above the cave under a curtain of hanging creepers. The temple opens

to the north, and a very subdued light—like the light from a painted window—filtering through the *ficus* branches, lends solemnity and enhanced beauty to this titanic architecture.

The walls are covered with bas-reliefs carved in the rock, the roof adorned with architraves of stone in infinite repetition of the same designs. The stone is grey, varied here and there with broad, black stains, and in other spots yellowish, with pale gold lights. Some of the sculpture remains still intact. The marriage of Siva and Parvati; the bride very timid, very fragile, leaning on the arm of the gigantic god, whose great height is crowned with a monumental tiara. Trimurti, a divinity with three faces, calm, smiling, and fierce—the symbol of Siva, the creator, the god of mercy, and of wrath. In a shadowed corner an elephant's head stands out —Ganesa, the god of wisdom, in the midst of a circle of graceful, slender, life-like figures of women. Quite at the end of the hall, two caryatides, tall and elegant, suggest lilies turned to women. In the inner sanctuary, a small edifice, with thick stone walls pierced with tiny windows that admit but a dim light, stands the lingam, a cylinder of stone crowned with scarlet flowers that look like flames in the doubtful light; and in deeper darkness,

under a stone canopy, another such idol, hardly visible. The Brahman priests are constantly engaged in daubing all the statues of these divinities with fresh crimson paint, and the votaries of Siva have a spot of the same colour in the middle of the forehead. Two lions, rigid in a hieratic attitude, keep guard over the entrance to a second temple, a good deal smaller and open to the air, beyond a courtyard, and screened with an awning of creepers.

In the atmosphere floated a pale blue smoke, rising from a heap of weeds that some children were burning, a weird sort of incense, acrid and aromatic, fading against the too-blue sky.

As we went down to the shore a whole swarm of little dark boys wanted to sell scarabs, rattans, birds' nests shaped like pockets, and dream-flowers, gathered from the creepers on the temples; large almond-scented lilies, and hanging bunches of the ebony-tree flowers, so fragile in texture and already faded in the sun, but exhaling till evening a faint perfume of verbena and lemon.

As we returned the wind had fallen, and the men rowed. The moon rose pale gold, and in the distance, in the violet haze, the lights of Bombay, mingled with the stars. The boatmen's

chant was very vague, a rocking measure on ascending intervals.

Afternoon, in the bazaar, in the warm glow of the sinking sun, wonderfully quiet. No sound but that of some workmen's tools; no passers-by, no shouting of voices, no bargaining. A few poor people stand by the stalls and examine the goods, but the seller does not seem to care. Invisible *guzlas* vibrate in the air, and the piping invitation of a moollah falls from the top of a minaret.

Then, suddenly, there was a clatter of tom-toms, and rattling of castanets, a Hindoo funeral passing by. The dead lay stretched on a bier, his face painted and horrible, a livid grin between the dreadful scarlet cheeks, covered with wreaths of jasmine and roses. A man walking before the corpse carried a jar of burning charcoal to light the funeral pile. Friends followed the bier, each bringing a log of wood, to add to the pyre as a last homage to the dead.

A Mohammedan funeral now. The body was in a coffin, covered with red stuff, sparkling with gold thread. The bearers and mourners chanted an almost cheerful measure, as they marched very slowly to the

burial-ground by the seaside, where the dead rest under spreading banyans and flowering jasmine.

Then a Parsee woman stopped my servant to ask him if I were a doctor.

"A doctor? I cannot say," replied Abibulla, "but the sahib knows many things." The woman's eyes entreated me. Would I not come? it would comfort the sick man, and help him, perhaps, to die easily if the gods would not spare him.

At the door of the house the sick man's wife was washing a white robe, in which he would be dressed for the grave on the morrow. The nearest relation of the dying must always wash his garment, and the woman, knowing that her husband had the plague and was doomed, as she was required by ritual to prepare for the burial while her husband was yet living, wore a look of mute and tearless resignation that terrified me.

The plague-stricken man lay on a low bed struggling with anguish; large drops of sweat stood on his face, his throat was wrapped in wet bandages, and he spoke with difficulty, as in a dream.

"Pané, sahib!"—"Water, sir!"

Then he closed his eyes and fell asleep at once, and so would he sleep till the end.

Out of doors, meanwhile, one funeral procession almost trod on the heels of the last; at the latest gleam of day, and out towards the west, above the Field of Burning, a broad red cloud filled all one quarter of the sky.

In the heart of Girgaum, one of the suburbs of Bombay, at the end of a street, under a large areca palm an old man was selling grain and rice in open baskets. A whole flight of bickering sparrows settled on his merchandise, and he looked at them with happy good humour without scaring them away.

In the town a zebu cow was trotting along with an air of business. To avoid a vehicle she jumped on to the footpath and went her way along the flagstones, and every Hindoo that she passed patted her buttock and then touched his forehead with the same hand with great reverence.

Outside Bombay, at the end of an avenue of tamarind trees, between hedges starred with lilac and pink, we came to Pinjerapoor, the hospital for animals. Here, in a sanded garden dotted with shrubs and flowers, stand sheds in which sick cows, horses and buffaloes are treated and cared for.

In another part, in a little building divided into compartments by wire bars, poor crippled dogs whined to me as I passed to take them away. Hens wandered about on wooden legs; and an ancient parrot, in the greatest excitement, yelled with all his might; he was undergoing treatment to make his lost feathers grow again, his hideous little black body being quite naked, with its large head and beak. In an open box, overhung with flowering jasmine, an Arab horse was suspended to the beams of the roof; two keepers by his side waved long white horsehair fans to keep away the flies. A perfect crowd of servants is employed in the care of the animals, and the litter is sweet and clean.

At Byculla in the evening we went to Grant Road, the haunt of the street beauties, where the gambling-houses are. At the open windows under the lighted lamps were coarsely-painted women dressed in gaudy finery. In the entries were more of such women, sitting motionless in the attitude of idols; some of them real marvels—thin, slender bronze limbs scarcely veiled in dark, transparent gauze, gold rings round their neck and arms, and heavy nanparas on their ankles,

One of them was standing against a curtain of black satin embroidered with gold; muslin that might have been a spider's web hardly cast a mist over her sheenless skin, pale, almost white against the glistening satin and gold, all brightly lighted up. With a large hibiscus flower in her hand she stood in a simple attitude, like an Egyptian painting, then moved a little, raising or lowering an arm, apparently not seeing the passers-by who gazed at her—lost in a dream that brought a strange green gleam to her dark eyes.

Japanese girls, too, in every possible hue, with piles of tinsel and flowers above their little flat faces all covered with saffron and white paint; little fidgeting parrakeets flitting from window to window, and calling to the people in the street in shrill, nasal tones.

In booths between these houses, the gamblers, standing round a board with numbered holes, were watching the ball as it slowly spun round, hit the edge, seemed to hesitate, and at last fell into one of the cups. Four-anna pieces, ten-rupee notes—anything will serve as a stake for the Hindoo ruffian in a starched shirt-front, low waistcoat and white tie, above the dhouti that hangs over his bare legs; or for the half-tipsy soldier and sailor,

the cautious Parsee who rarely puts down a stake, or the ragged coolie who has come to tempt fortune with his last silver bit.

All alike were fevered from the deafening music of harmoniums and tom-toms performing at the back of each gambling-booth—a din that drowned shouts of glee and quarrelling.

Turning out of this high street blazing with lamps, were dens of prostitution, and dark, cut-throat alleys.

Then a quiet little street. Our guide paused in front of a whitewashed house. An old woman came out, and with many salaams and speeches of welcome led us into a large, low room.

Here, one by one, in came the nautch-girls, dancers. Robed in stiff sarees, their legs encumbered with very full trousers, they stood extravagantly upright, their arms away from their sides and their hands hanging loosely. At the first sound of the tambourines, beaten by men who squatted close to the wall, they began to dance; jumping forward on both feet, then backward, striking their ankles together to make their nanparas ring, very heavy anklets weighing on their feet, bare with silver toe-rings. One of them spun on and on for a

long time, while the others held a high, shrill note —higher, shriller still; then suddenly everything stopped, the music first, then the dancing—in the air, as it were — and the nautch-girls, huddled together like sheep in a corner of the room, tried to move us with the only three English words they knew, the old woman repeating them; and as finally we positively would not understand, the jumping and idiotic spinning and shouts began again in the heated air of the room.

"Nautch-girls for tourists, like Europeans," said my Indian servant Abibulla. "Can-can dancing-girls," he added, with an air of triumph at having shown me a wonder.

At the top of Malabar Hill, in a garden with freshly raked walks and clumps of flowers edged with pearl-shells, stand five limewashed towers, crowned with a living battlement of vultures: the great Dokma, the Towers of Silence, where the Parsees are laid after death, "as naked as when they came into the world and as they must return to nothingness," to feed the birds of prey, which by the end of a few hours leave nothing of the body but the bones, to bleach in the sun and be scorched

to dust that is soon carried down to the sea by the first rains of the monsoon.

One of these towers, smaller than the others, and standing apart at the end of the garden, is used for those who have committed suicide. The bearers of the dead dwell in a large yellow house roofed with zinc. There they live, apart from the world, never going down to Bombay but to fetch a corpse and bring it up to the vultures, nor daring to mingle with the living till after nine days of purification.

In another building is the hall where the dastours say the last prayers over the dead in the presence of the relations; the body is then stripped in a consecrated chamber and abandoned to the mysteries of the tower.

On the great banyan trees in the garden, and on every palm, torpid vultures sit in the sun, awaiting the meal that will come with the next funeral procession.

Far away a murmur is heard, a long-drawn chant, suddenly arousing the birds; they flap their wings, stretch themselves clumsily, and then fly towards one of the towers.

We could see the procession coming straight up a hollow ravine from the valley to the Dokma, a path that none but Parsees are allowed to tread;

eight bearers in white, the bier also covered with white, and, far behind, the relations and friends of the dead, all robed in white, two and two, each pair holding between them a square of white stuff in sign of union. They came very slowly up the steps of the steep ascent with a measured chant, in muffled tones, on long-drawn vowels. And from the surrounding trees, from far and near, with a great flutter of wings, the vultures flew to meet the corpse, darkening the sky for a moment.

In the evening, as I again went past the Towers of Silence, the palm trees were once more crowded with sleeping birds gorged with all the food sent them by the plague. On the other side of Back Bay, above the Field of Burning, a thick column of smoke rose up, red in the last beams of the crimson sun.

In the silence of a moonless night nine o'clock struck from the great tower of the Law Courts—a pretty set of chimes, reminding me of Bruges or Antwerp; and when the peal had died away a bugle in the sepoys' quarters took up the strain of the chimes, only infinitely softer, saddened to a minor key and to a slower measure; while in the distance

an English trumpet, loud and clear, sounded the recall in counterpart.

Outside the town the carriage went on for a long time through a poverty-stricken quarter, and past plots of ground dug out for the erection of factories. Fragile flowers, rose and lilac, bloomed in the shade of banyans and palm trees. Hedges of jasmine and bougainvillea, alternating with rose trees, scented the air. Then we came to Parel, a suburb where, in a spacious enclosure, stands the hospital for infectious diseases. It is a lofty structure of iron, the roof and walls of matting, which is burnt when infected with microbes, and which allows the free passage of the air. In spite of the heat outside it was almost cool in these shady halls.

All the sick were *sudras*, Hindoos of the lowest caste. All the rest, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisiyas, would rather die at home, uncared for, than endure the promiscuous mixture of caste at the hospital, and contact with their inferiors. Even the sudras are but few. There is an all-pervading dread of a hospital, fostered by Indian bone-setters and sorcerers, stronger even than the fear of the pestilence; the people hide themselves to die, like

wounded animals, and their relations will not speak of an illness for fear of seeing anybody belonging to them taken to the hospital.

All the sufferers lay on thin mattresses spread on low camp beds; they were all quiet, torpid in the sleep of fever. The doctor showed them to me, one after another; there was nothing distressing to be seen in their naked bodies lying under a sheet. Some, indeed, had dressings under the arm, or on the groin. One, who had just been brought in, had a large swelling above the hip, a gland which was lanced to inject serum.

This, then, is the malady of the appalling name—the Plague—hardened glands in the throat or under the arm; the disease that gives its victim fever, sends him to sleep, exhausts, and infallibly kills him.

In the ward we had just passed through there were none but convalescents or favourable cases. At the further end of the room a boy, fearfully emaciated, so thin that his body, lying in the hollow of the mattress, was hardly visible under the covering, was asleep as we approached. He had come from one of the famine districts, and in escaping from one scourge had come to where the other had clutched him. The doctor touched him on the

shoulder, and he opened his great splendid eyes. The awakening brought him gladness, or perhaps it was the end of his dream, for he had the happy look of a contented child, shook his shaven head waggishly, and the single corkscrew lock at the top, and was asleep again instantly.

In the further room were four sufferers past all hope: one in the anguish of delirium that made him cry out the same words again and again, in a hoarse voice that was growing fainter. He was held by two attendants. Another lay with chattering teeth; a third was struggling violently, hidden under his coverlet; the fourth seemed unconscious, apathetic.

Not far from the great hospital, in huts of bamboo and matting, some Hindoos were isolated, who refused to be attended by any but native doctors, or to take anything but simples. An old man lay there who had a sort of stiff white paste applied to the swellings under his arms. He, too, was delirious, and watched us go by with a vague, stupefied glare—eyes that were already dead.

In another hut was a woman, brought hither yesterday with her husband, who had died that morning. She had an exquisite, long, pale face and blue-black hair. On her arms were many

bangles, and gold earrings glittered in her ears. For a moment she opened her large gazelle-like eyes, and then with a very sad little sigh turned to the wall, making her trinkets rattle. She was still dressed in her blue choli. A striped coverlet had been thrown over her; by her bed she had a whole set of burnished copper pans and canisters. Charmingly pretty, and not yet exhausted by the disease, which only declared itself yesterday, she was sleeping quietly, more like a being in a story-book than a plague-stricken creature, who must infallibly die on the morrow under the incapable treatment of the Hindoo "bone-setter."

And then we came away from this hospital, where no sister of charity, no woman even, had brought some little consolation or the kindliness of a smile to these dying creatures, whose wandering or frantic black eyes haunted me.

ELLORA

THE SACRED HILL

At sunrise we reached Nandgaun, whence I went on towards Ellora in a tonga, the Indian post-chaise, with two wheels and a wide awning so low and so far forward that the traveller must stoop to look out at the landscape. A rosy haze still hung over the country, rent in places and revealing transparent blue hills beyond the fields of crude green barley and rice. The road was hedged with mimosa, cassia, and a flowering thorny shrub, looking like a sort of honeysuckle with yellow blossoms, and smelling strongly of ginger.

We met a strange caravan; a small party of men surrounding more than a hundred women wrapped in dark robes, and bearing on their veiled heads heavy bales sewn up in matting, and large copper pots. A little blind boy led the way, singing a monotonous chant of three high notes. He came up to my tonga, and to thank me for the small coin I gave him he said, "Salaam, Sahib," and then repeated the same words again and again to his

tune, dancing a little step of his own invention till the whole caravan was hidden from me in a cloud of dust.

In a copse, women, surrounded by naked children, were breaking stones, which men carried to the road. The women screamed, hitting the hard pebbles with a too small pick, the children fought, the men squabbled and scolded, and amid all this hubbub three Parsees, sitting at a table under the shade of a tamarind tree, were adding up lines of figures on papers fluttering in the wind. There was not a dwelling in sight, no sign of an encampment, nothing but these labouring folk and the bureaucracy out in the open air, under the beating sun.

Next came a long file of carts, conveying cases of goods "made in Manchester," or loaded, in unstable equilibrium, with dry yellow fodder like couch grass, eaten by the horses here; and they struggled along the road which, crossing the limitless plain, appeared to lead nowhere.

When we stopped to change horses, two or three mud-huts under the shade of a few palm trees would emit an escort of little native boys, who followed the fresh team, staring at the carriage and the "Inglis Sahib" with a gaze of rapturous stupefaction.

Flocks of almost tame partridges and wood-pigeons occupying the road did not fly till they were almost under the horses' feet, and all the way as we went, we saw, scampering from tree to tree, the scared little squirrels, grey with black stripes and straight-up bushy tails.

At the frontier of the Nizam's territory, a man-at-arms, draped in white, and mounted on a horse that looked like silver in the sunshine, sat with a lance in rest against his stirrup. He gazed passively at the distance, not appearing to see us, not even bowing.

Towards evening Ellora came in sight, the sacred hill crowned with temples, in a blaze of glory at first from the crimson sunset, and then vaguely blue, wiped out, vanishing in the opalescent mist.

At Roza, the plateau above the Hindoo sanctuaries, above a dozen of Moslem mausoleums are to be seen under the spreading banyans that shelter them beneath their shade, and sometimes hide them completely; the white objects are in a whimsical style of architecture, hewn into strange shapes, which in the doubtful starlight might be taken for ruins.

One of these mausoleums served us for a bungalow. The distance was visible from the window openings, which were fringed with cuscus blinds

that would be pulled down at night: the spreading dark plain, broken by gleaming pools, and dotted with the lamps in the temples to Vishnu, of which the cones were visible in silhouette, cutting the clear horizon.

The almost imperceptible hum of a bagpipe came up from below; in a white mosque of open colonnades enclosing a paved court, and in front of the little lamps that burned above the holy of holies sheltering the Koran, figures in light garments were prostrate in prayer; their murmurs came up to us in sighs, mingling with the slow and tender notes of the music.

Rising from the highest point of the hill the huge tomb of Aurungzeeb the Great—more huge in the darkness—stood out clearly, a black mass, its bulbous dome against the sky. Flocks of goats and sheep came clambering along the ridge to shelter for the night in the recesses of its walls. Then, one by one, the lights died out. Infinite calm brooded over the scene; a very subtle fragrance, as of rose and verbena, seemed to rise from the ground and scent the still air; and over the motionless earth swept enormous black bats in silent flight, with slow, regularly-beating wings.

At the first ray of sunrise I went down to the temples, hewn out of the side of the hill and extending for above a mile and a quarter. Gigantic stairs are cut in the rock, and lead to caves enshrining immense altars, on which Buddha or other idols of enormous size are enthroned. Hall after hall is upheld by carved pillars. Bas-reliefs on the walls represent the beatitudes of Krishna surrounded by women, or the vengeance of Vishnu the terrible, or the marriage of Siva and Parvati; while on the flat roof, on the panels and architraves—all part of the solid rock—there is an endless procession of Krishnas and Vishnus, on a rather smaller scale, producing utter weariness of their unvaried attitudes and beatific or infuriated grimacing.

One temple to Buddha only, on an elongated plan, ends in a vault forming a bulb-shaped cupola supported on massive columns, quite Byzantine in character and wholly unexpected. The dim light, coming in only through a low door and two small windows filled in with pierced carving, enhances the impression of being in some ancient European fane, and the Buddha on the high altar has a look of suffering and emaciation that suggests a work of the fourteenth century.

More temples, each more stupendous than the

last, and more halls hewn in the rifts of the hills, and over them monks' cells perched on little columns, which at such a height look no thicker than threads.

And there, under the open sky, stands the crowning marvel of Ellora, the temple or Kailas, enclosed within a wall thirty metres high, pierced with panels, balconies, and covered arcades, and resting on lions and elephants of titanic proportions. This temple is hewn out of a single rock, isolated from the hill, and is divided into halls ornamented in high relief. Covered verandahs run all round the irregular mass in two storeys, reminding us, in their elaborate design, of the Chinese balls of carved ivory with other balls inside them. Nothing has been added or built on. The complicated architecture—all in one piece, without cement or the smallest applied ornament—makes one dizzy at the thought of such a miracle of perseverance and patience.

The external decoration is broken by broad flat panels, incised in places so delicately that the patterns look like faded fresco, scarcely showing against the gold-coloured ground of yellow stone. In front of the Kailas stand two tall obelisks, carved from top to bottom with an extraordinary feeling for proportion which makes them seem taller still, and two gigantic elephants, guardians of the sanctuary,

heavy, massive images of stone, worm-eaten by time into tiny holes and a myriad wrinkles, producing a perfect appearance of the coarse skin of the living beast.

In the twilight of the great galleries the gods are assembled in groups, standing or sitting, rigid or contorted into epileptic attitudes, and thin bodies of human aspect end in legs or arms resembling serpents or huge fins, rather than natural limbs: Kali, the eight-armed goddess, leaping in the midst of daggers, performing a straddling dance while she holds up a tiny corpse on the point of the short sword she brandishes; impassible Sivas wearing a tall mitre; Krishna playing the flute to the thousand virgins who are in love with him, and who fade into perspective on the panel. And every divinity has eyes of jade, or of white plaster, hideously visible against the pale grey stone softly polished by time.

Amid hanging swathes of creepers, in a fold of the hill stands another temple, of red stone, very gloomy; and, in its depths, a rigid white Buddha, with purple shadows over his eyes of glittering crystal. And so on to temples innumerable, so much alike that, seeing each for the first time, I fancied that I was retracing my steps; and endless little shrine-like recesses, sheltering each its Buddha, make blots

of shadow on the bright ochre-coloured stone of the cliffs. For centuries, in the rainy season, thousands of pilgrims have come, year after year, to take up their abode in these cells, spending the cold weather in prayer and then going off to beg their living and coming back for the next wet season.

The Viharas, monasteries of cells hollowed out in the hillside, extend for more than half a mile ; briars and creepers screen the entrances leading to these little retreats, a tangle of flowers and carvings.

As the sun sank, a magical light of lilac fading into pink fell on the mountain temples, on the rock partly blackened by ages or scorched to pale yellow, almost white; it shed an amethystine glow, transfiguring the carved stone to lacework with light showing through. A wheeling flock of noisy parrakeets filled the air with short, unmeaning cries, intolerable in this rose and lavender stillness, where no sound could be endurable but the notes of an organ. A ray of fiery gold shot straight into the red temple, falling on the marble Buddha. For a moment the idol seemed to be on fire, surrounded by a halo of burning copper.

Under the cool shade of evening, the softening

touch of twilight, all this sculptured magnificence assumes an air of supreme grandeur, and calls up a world of legends and beliefs till the temples seem to recede, fading into the vapour of the blue night.

While I spent the hot hours of the day in the bungalow, a flock of birds came in through the open doors, and quietly picked up the crumbs on the floor. They were followed by grey squirrels, which at first crouched in the corners, but presently, growing bolder, ended by climbing on to the table, with peering eyes, in hope of nuts or bread-crusts.

We were off by break of day. Among hanging creepers, shrubs, and trees, temples, gilded by the rising sun, gleamed dimly through the rosy mist, and faded gradually behind a veil of white dust raised by the flocks coming down from Roza, or melted into the dazzling blaze of light over the distance.

At Jané the pagoḍas are of red stone. The largest, conical in shape, covers with its ponderous roof, overloaded with sculptured figures of gods and animals, a very small passage, at the end of which two lights burning hardly reveal a white idol standing amid a perfect carpet of flowers. Round the sacred tank that lies at the base of the

temple, full of stagnant greenish-white water, are flights of steps in purple-hued stone; at the angles, twelve little conical kiosks, also of red stone and highly decorated, shelter twelve similar idols, but black. And between the temples, among the few huts that compose the village of Jané, stand Moslem mausoleums and tombs. Verses from the Koran are carved on the stones, now scarcely visible amid the spreading briars and garlands of creepers hanging from the tall trees that are pushing their roots between the flagstones that cover the dead.

Before us the road lay pink in colour, with purple lines where the pebbles were as yet uncrushed; it was hedged with blossoming thorn-bushes, and among the yellow and violet flowers parrots were flitting, and screaming minahs, large black birds with russet-brown wings, gleaming in the sun like burnished metal.

The post-chaise was a tonga, escorted by a mounted sowar, armed with a naked sword. He rode ahead at a rattling trot, but the clatter was drowned by the shouts of the driver and of the sais, who scrambled up on the steps and urged the steeds on with excited flogging.

At a stopping-place a flock of sheep huddled together in terror, hens scuttered about clucking anxiously, the stable dogs crouched and slunk; high overhead a large eagle was slowly wheeling in the air.

Round a village well, enclosed by walls with heavy doors that are always shut at night, a perfect flower-bed of young women had gathered, slender figures wrapped in robes of bright, light colours, drawing water in copper jars. The sunbeams, dropping between the leaves of a baobab tree that spread its immense expanse of boughs over the well, sparkled on their trinkets and the copper pots, dappling the gaudy hues of their raiment with flickering gold.

NANDGAUN

Is a long row of bungalows in their own gardens, on each side of an avenue of thick trees that meet above the road. We crossed the bed of a dry torrent and came to the native village, a labyrinth of clay huts and narrow alleys through which goats and cows wandered, finding their way home to their own stables. On a raised terrace

three Parsees, bowing to the sun with clasped hands, prostrated themselves in adoration, and watched the crimson globe descend wrapped in golden haze; and as soon as the disc had vanished, leaving a line of fiery light in the sky, all three rose, touched each other's hands, passed their fingers lightly over their faces, and resumed their conversation.

In every house a tiny lamp allowed us to see the women, squatting while they pounded millet, or cooked in copper pots. Then night suddenly fell, and I could no longer find my way about the dark alleys, stumbling as I went over cows lying across the path, till I suddenly found myself opposite a very tall pagoda, three storeys high. On the threshold the bonzes were banging with all their might on gongs and drums, alternately with bells. And on the opposite side of the street, in a sort of shed enclosed on three sides, but wide open to the passers-by, people in gay robes were prostrate before two shapeless idols, Krishna and Vishnu, painted bright red, twinkling with ornaments of tinsel and lead-paper, and crudely lighted up by lamps with reflectors. And then at once I was between low houses again, and going down tortuous streets to the river-bed,

whither I was guided by the sound of castanets and tambourines.

At the further end of the last turning I saw a fire like blazing gold, the soaring flames flying up to an enormous banyan tree, turning its leaves to living fire. All round the pile on which the dead was being burned was a crowd drumming on copper pots and tom-toms.

Very late in the evening came the sound of darboukhas once more. A throng of people, lighted up by a red glow, came along, escorting a car drawn by oxen. At each of the four corners were children carrying torches, and in the middle of the car a tall pole was fixed. On this, little Hindoo boys were performing the most extraordinary acrobatic tricks, climbing it with the very tips of their toes and fingers, sliding down again head foremost, and stopping within an inch of the floor. Their bronze skins, in contrast to the white loin-cloth that cut them across the middle, and their fine muscular limbs, made them look like antique figures. The performance went on to the noise of drums and singing, and was in honour of the seventieth birthday of a Mohammedan witch who dwelt in the village. The car presently moved off, and, after two or three

stoppages, reached the old woman's door. The toothless hag, her face carved into black furrows, under a towzle of white hair emerging from a ragged kerchief, with a stupid stare lighted up by a gleam of wickedness when she fixed an eye, sat on the ground in her hovel surrounded by an unspeakable heap of rags and leavings. The crowd squeezed in and gathered round her; but she sat perfectly unmoved, and the little acrobats, performing in front of her door, did not win a glance from her. And then, the noise and glare annoying her probably, she turned with her face to the wall and remained so. She never quitted her lair; all she needed was brought to her by the villagers, who dreaded the spells she could cast. Her reputation for wisdom and magic had spread far and wide. The Nizam's cousin, and prime minister of the dominion, never fails to pay her a visit when passing through Nandgaun, and other even greater personages, spoken of only with bated breath, have been known to consult her.

BARODA

An old-world Indian city with nothing of modern flimsiness and tinsel. The arcades and balconies of the houses in the bazaar are carved out of solid wood, polished by ages to tones of burnished steel and warm gold. Copper nails in the doors shine in the sun. Along the quiet streets, where nothing passes by but, now and then, a slow-paced camel, Hindoos make their way, draped in pale pink, or in white scarely tinged with green or orange colour; little naked children, with necklaces, bangles and belts of silver, looking like ribbons on their bronze skin. In front of the shops is a brilliant harmony of copper, sheeny fruits, and large pale green pots. A glad atmosphere of colour surrounds the smiling people and the houses with their old scorched stones.

The coachman we engaged at the station was a giant, with an olive skin and a huge, pale pink turban. He was clad in stuffs so thin that on his box, against the light, we could see the shape of his body through the thickness of five or six tunics that he wore one over another.

After passing through the town, all flowery with green gardens, at the end of a long, white, dusty road, where legions of beggars followed me, calling me "Papa" and "Bab," that is to say father and mother, I arrived at the residence of the Gaekwar, the Rajah of Baroda. At the gate we met the palace sentries released from duty. Eight men in long blue pugarees and an uniform of yellow khakee (a cotton stuff), like that of the sepoys, with their guns on their shoulders, looked as if they were taking a walk, marching in very fantastic step. One of them had a bird hopping about in a little round cage that hung from the stock of his gun. Three camels brought up the rear, loaded with bedding in blue cotton bundles.

In the heart of an extensive park, where wide lawns are planted with gigantic baobabs and clumps of bamboo and tamarind, stands an important-looking building, hideously modern in a mixture of heterogeneous styles and materials, of a crude yellow colour, and much too new. There is no attempt at unity of effect. A central dome crowns the edifice and a square tower rises by the side of it. Some portions, like pavilions, low and small, carry ornaments disproportioned to their size; while others, containing vast halls, have minute windows pierced

in their walls, hardly larger than loopholes, but framed in elaborate sculpture and lost in the great mass of stone. Arcades of light and slender columns, connected by lace-like pierced work of alarming fragility, enclose little courts full of tree-ferns and waving palms spreading over large pools of water. The walls are covered with niches, balconies, pilasters, and balustrades carved in the Indian style, the same subjects constantly repeated.

Inside, after going through a long array of rooms filled with sham European furniture — handsome chairs and sofas covered with plush, Brussels carpets with red and yellow flowers on a green ground — we came to the throne-room, an enormous, preposterous hall, which, with its rows of cane chairs and its machine-made Gothic woodwork, was very like the waiting-room or dining-room of an American hotel.

The Rajah being absent we were allowed to see everything. On the upper floor is the Ranee's dressing-room. All round the large room were glass wardrobes, in which could be seen bodices in the latest Paris fashion, and ugly enough; and then a perfect rainbow of tender opaline hues: light silks as fine as cobwebs, shawls of every dye in Cashmere wool with woven patterns, and

gauze of that delicate rose-colour and of the yellow that looks like gold with the light shining through, which are only to be seen in India—royal fabrics, dream-colours, carefully laid up in sandal-wood and stored behind glass and thick curtains, which were dropped over them as soon as we had looked. And crowding every table and bracket were the most childish things—screens, cups and boxes in imitation bronze, set with false stones—the playthings of a little barbarian. A coloured photograph stood on the toilet-table between brushes and pomatum-pots; it represented the mistress of this abode, a slender doll without brains, her eyes fixed on vacancy.

Then her bedroom: no bed, only a vast mattress rolled up against the wall, and spread over the floor every night—it must cover the whole room.

At the end of the passage was a sort of den, where, through the open door, I caught sight of a marvellous Indian hanging of faded hues on a pale ground, hidden in places by stains; the noble pattern represented a peacock spreading his tail between two cypresses.

In front of the palace, beds filled with common plants familiar in every European garden fill the place of honour; they are very rare, no doubt, in

these latitudes, and surprising amid the gorgeous hedges of wild bougainvillea that enclose the park.

In the train again, *en route* for Ahmedabad. As we crossed the fertile plain of Gujerat the first monkeys were to be seen, in families, in tribes, perched on tall pine trees, chasing each other, or swinging on the wires that rail in the road, and solemnly watching the train go by. Peacocks marched about with measured step, and spread their tails in the tall banyan trees tangled with flowering creepers. Shyer than these, the grey secretary birds, with a red roll above their beak, seemed waiting to fly as we approached. On the margin of the lakes and streams thousands of white cranes stood fishing, perched on one leg; and in every patch of tobacco, or dahl, or cotton, was a hut perched on four piles, its boarded walls and leaf-thatch giving shelter to a naked native, watching to scare buffaloes, birds, monkeys, and thieves from his crop.

AHMEDABAD

In the middle of the town, which consists entirely of small houses carved from top to bottom, are two massive towers, joined by the remains of the thick wall that formerly enclosed the immensity of the sultan's palace and its outbuildings. The towers now serve as prisons; the stone lattice which screened the private rooms has been replaced by iron bars, the last traces of ornamentation covered up with fresh plaster. Behind the wall the ancient garden, kept green of old by legions of gardeners, is a mere desert of dust; a mausoleum in the middle, transformed into a court of justice, displays all the perfection of Indian art in two pointed windows carved and pierced in imitation of twining and interlaced branches; marvels of delicacy and grace left intact through centuries of vandalism.

Beyond these ruins, at the end of a long avenue bordered with tamarind trees, beyond an artificial lake, is the tomb of Shah Alam. A wide marble court; to the right a mosque with three ranks of columns; above, a massive roof crowned with a

bulbous dome, flanked by fragile minarets. The fountain for ablutions in the midst of the court is surmounted by a marble slab supported on slender columns. To the left, under the shade of a large tree, is the mausoleum of marble, yellow with age, looking like amber, the panels pierced with patterns of freer design than goldsmith's work.

Inside, a subdued light, rosy and golden, comes in through the myriad interstices, casting a glow of colour on the pierced marble screens which enclose the tomb of Shah Alam, Sultan of Gujerat. The tomb itself, hung with a red cloth under a canopy on posts inlaid with mother-of-pearl, is dimly seen in the twilight, scarcely touched here and there with the pearly gleam and lights reflected from ostrich eggs and glass balls—toys dedicated by the faithful to the hero who lies there in his last sleep. Yet further away, under the trees, is another tomb, almost the same, but less ornamented, where the sultan's wives repose.

Finally, in a third mosque, lies Shah Alam's brother. On the stone that covers him a sheet of lead bears the print of two gigantic feet, intended to perpetuate to all ages the remembrance of his enormous height.

In the town is the tomb of the Ranee Sipri: walls of lace, balconies of brocade carved in stone. Opposite this mausoleum are an open mosque and two minarets as slim as sapling pines, wrought with arabesques as fine as carved ivory. There are lamps carved in relief on the walls, each hung by chains under-cut in stone with Chinese elaboration; and this lamp is everywhere repeated—on the mosque, on the tomb, and on the base of the minarets. The building, which has the faintly russet tone of old parchment, when seen in the glow of sunset takes a hue of ruby gold that is almost diaphanous, as filmy as embroidered gauze.

Wherever the alleys cross in the bazaar, open cages are placed on pillars of carved marble or wood, and in these, charitable hands place grain for the birds; thus every evening, round these shelters there is a perpetual flutter of pigeons, minahs, and sparrows, pushing for places, and finally packed closely together, while the little lanterns flash out on all sides, giving a magical aspect to the shop-fronts, turning copper to gold, fruit to flowers, and falling like a caress on the wayfarers in thin pale-hued robes.

Back to the station, where we lived in our carriage, far more comfortable than a hotel bed-

room. T., my travelling companion in Gujerat, received a visit from a gentleman badly dressed in the European fashion, and followed by black servants outrageously bedizened. When this personage departed in his landau, rather shabby but drawn by magnificent horses, T. was obliged to tell me he was a rajah—the Rajah of Surat—quite a genuine rajah, and even very rich, which is somewhat rare in these days among Indian princes.

Some prisoners were brought to the train; a single sepoy led them by a chain. Two carried enormous bales, and the third a heavy case. They packed themselves into a compartment that was almost full already, and one of a couple that were chained together by the wrists put the chain round his neck; then, when he had scraped acquaintance with the other travellers, he amused himself by tormenting the hawkers of drink and pastry, bargaining with them for a long time and buying nothing, quite delighted when he had put them in a rage with him.

In the third-class carriages, where the compartments are divided by wooden lattice, among the bundles, the copper jars, and the trunks painted in the gaudiest colours, sit women in showy saree and decked in all their jewels; children in little silk

coats braided with tinsel, and open over their little bare bodies; men with no garment whatever but a loin-cloth or dhouti. There is endless chatter, a perpetual bickering for places, the bewilderment of those who lose themselves, shouts from one end of the station to the other, and in the foreground of the hubbub the incessant cries of the water and sweetmeat sellers.

When the express had arrived that morning from Bombay, eight bodies were found of victims to the plague who had died on the way. They were laid on the platform and covered with a white sheet; and in the station there was a perfect panic, a surge of terror which spread to the town, and broke up the market. The shops were all shut, and the people rushed to their knees before the idols in the temples.

A naked fakir, his brown skin plastered with flour, and his long black hair all matted, bent over the bodies muttering holy words; then flourishing two yellow rags that he took out of a wallet hanging from his shoulder, he exorcised the station, driving away the spectre of the pestilence; going very fast, running along the line by which the evil had come, and vanishing where the rails ended behind the trees.

Music attracted us to where the cross-roads met, darboukhas struck with rapid fingers and a bagpipe droning out a lively tune. The musicians sat among stones and bricks, tapping in quick time on their ass's-skin drums, beating a measure for some masons to work to. Women carried the bricks men spread the mortar; they all sang and worked with almost dancing movements in time with the music, as if they were at play.

A Jaïn temple. A confusion of ornament, carved pillars, capitals far too heavy, with a medley of animals, gods and flowers, under a roof all graven and embossed. In the sanctuary, where the walls are riddled with carving, is an enormous Buddha of black marble decked out with emeralds, gold beads and rare pearls, hanging in necklaces down to his waist. A large diamond blazes in his forehead above crystal eyes, terrifically bright. Every evening all this jewellery—the gift of Hati Singh, a wealthy Jaïn merchant who built the temple—is packed away into a strong-box, which we were shown in the cellar.

All round the sanctuary, in niches under a square cloister, are three hundred and fifty alabaster Buddhas, all alike, with the same jewel in their forehead, and on their shoulders and round their bodies

gold bands set with imitation gems and cut glass. An old woman, who had come thither at daybreak, had prayed to each of these Buddhas; to each she had offered up the same brief petition, she had struck the three bells on her way, and she was now in the sanctuary, calling out a prayer while beating a gong that hangs from the arch. Meanwhile other worshippers were murmuring their invocations prostrate before the jewelled Buddha.

Out in the street a woman, bare-backed, was submitting to be brushed down the spine by a neighbour with a brush of cuscus; she scorned to answer me when I asked whether she felt better, but shutting her eyes desired the operator to go on more slowly.

In an ancient mosque, somewhat dilapidated, was an infant-school. Little heaps of stuff, pink and yellow and white, and above them emaciated little faces with large dark eyes that had greenish-blue lights in them, all moving and rocking continually, and spelling aloud out of open books set up on wooden folding desks. The master in his pulpit listened stolidly with half-shut eyes, and detected the mistakes in all this twitter of little voices.

Not far from Ahmedabad, in a sandy desert

where, nevertheless, a few proliferous baobabs grow, there is a subterranean pagoda drowned in stagnant water that has filled three out of the six floors. These are now sacred baths, in which, when I went there, Hindoos were performing their pious ablutions. Sculptured arcades, upheld by fragile columns, skirt the pools; the stones are green under the water, and undistinguishable from the architecture reflected in the motionless surface that looks blue under the shadow of the great banyan trees meeting in an arch over the temple. A sickly scent of lotus and sandal-wood fills the moist air, and from afar, faint and shrill, the cries of monkeys and minah-birds die away into silence over the calm pool.

A little way off, in the burning sandy plain, is a pagoda sacred to the pigeons. Lying as close as tiles, in the sun, they hide the roof under their snowy plumage. Round pots are hung all about the building, swaying in the wind, for the birds to nest in, a red decoration against the russet stone; each one contains an amorous and cooing pair.

The Jumna Musjid, in the middle of the bazaar, is a reminder of the mosque at Cordova.[1] A thousand

unmatched columns stand in utter confusion of irregular lines, producing a distressing sensation of an unfinished structure ready to fall into ruins. Every style is here, and materials of every description, brought hither—as we are told by the inscription engraved over one of the lofty pointed doorways—from the temples of the unbelievers destroyed by Shah Mahmoud Bogarat, the taker of cities, that he might, out of their remains, raise this mosque to the glory of Allah. In the centre of the arcade a large flagstone covers the Jaïn idol, which was formerly worshipped here; and my servant Abibulla, as a good Moslem, stamped his foot on the stone under which lies the "contemptible image." Some workmen were carving a column; they had climbed up and squatted balanced; they held their tools with their toes, just chipping at the marble in a way that seemed to make no impression, chattering all the time in short words that seemed all of vowels.

Behind this mosque, by narrow alleys hung with airy green silk that had just been dyed and spread to dry in the sun, we made our way to the mausoleum of Badorgi Shah: a cloister, an arcade of octagonal columns carved with flowers, and in the court, the tombs of white stone, covered with in-

scriptions, that look like arabesques. There are some children's tombs, too, quite small, in finer and even whiter stone, and two tiny stones under which lie Badorgi's parrot and cat.

PALITANA

The carriage of the Rajah of Palitana awaited us this morning at Songad. As an escort two sowars in long blue cloaks and red turbans, their guns slung behind them, galloped by our vehicle. On each side of the road lay fields of scorched grass, quite burnt and very fine, glistening like silk, reflecting the sun as far as we could see.

In the middle of a large garden outside the town was the visitors' bungalow, the divan, where the prince's prime minister received us, and made us welcome on behalf of his master. Hardly were we seated when in came the Rajah, driving two wonderful horses drawing a phaeton. Dressed in a long black coat over very narrow trousers of white muslin, Gohel Sheri Man Sinjhi wore a turban, slightly tilted from the left side, and made of hundreds of fine pale green cords rolled round

and round. The Prince of Morvi, and another of the Rajah's cousins, followed in perfectly appointed carriages, drawn by thoroughbreds. Last of all, carried by an attendant from her landau to the large reception-room where we sat gravely in a circle, came a little princess of seven years old, the Rajah's daughter. Enormous black eyes with dark blue lights, her tawny skin a foil to her jewels, and the gold and silver embroidery of a little violet velvet coat open over a long tunic of green silk, trousers of pink satin, and yellow leather slippers. A plum-coloured cap, worked with gold trefoils, was set very straight on her black hair; she wore, in her ears, slender rings of gold filigree, and had a nose-stud of a fine pearl set in gold. She stood between her father's knees, squeezing close up to him with downcast eyes, never daring to stir but when we seemed to be paying no heed to her.

At the end of a quarter of an hour the princes drove off through a great cloud of white dust sparkling in the sun, and raised by the carriages and the escort of armed sowars.

In the afternoon the Minister came to take us to the palace. The Rajah, with his cousins, met us at the

foot of the grand staircase; a detachment of sowars were on guard. With great ceremony, preceded and followed by an army of officials and attendants, we went up to a room where a silver throne, inlaid with gold, of exquisite workmanship, between two armchairs of massive silver, looked quite out of keeping with gilt wood chairs with tapestry seats, and the everlasting Brussels carpet of poor and glaring design. On the various tables was the latest trumpery from Oxford Street—plush frames and varnished wooden screens; a shower of glass lustres hung from the ceiling.

Three musicians in white, with red turbans, squatted down on the ground in front of us. One sang to the accompaniment of a viol with three strings and nine frets, and a darboukha; a drawling strain, all on the upper notes, and rising higher to a shrill monotonous wail, retarded, as it were, to a rhythm against the accompaniment; then by degrees more lively, faster and faster, ending with a sudden stop on a word of guttural consonants. But the man began again; he sang for a long time, varying the tunes, always returning to the first. But nothing of them remains in my mind, not even the rhythm, only a vague recollection, a singular echo, confused but charm-

ing, in spite of the weirdness of the too high pitch.

Then two children, their pretty, fresh voices in unison, sang some womanly songs, languishing ballads, swinging to a very indefinite rhythm, and suggestive of slow dances and waving gauze scarves in flowery gardens under the moonlight.

With tea a servant brought packets of betel in a chased gold box, with a lid imitating a lotus flower. Then, when everybody was served, he carefully replaced the precious object in an embroidered silk bag and disappeared.

The little princess had made her way between the seats, close up to us; she was wrapped in dark-coloured gauze, with woven gold borders, so light! scarcely less light than the diaphanous material of the dress. And as I admired this wonderful silk, the Rajah had some bayadères' dresses brought out for me to see: twelve or fifteen skirts, one above another, pleated and spangled with gold, yet, hanging to one finger, scarcely the weight of a straw.

In a coach-house, through which we passed on our way to see the prince's favourite horses with the state carriages—quite commonplace and comfortable, and made at Palitana—was a *chigram*,

off which its silk cover was lifted; it was painted bright red and spangled with twinkling copper nails. This carriage, which is hermetically closed when the Ranee goes out in it, was lined with cloth-of-gold patterned with Gohel Sheri's initials within a horseshoe: a little hand-glass on one of the cushions, two boxes of chased silver, the curtains and hangings redolent of otto of roses.

A carriage with four horses, and servants in dark green livery thickly braided with silver, and gold turbans with three raised corners very like the cocked hats of the French Guards, were standing in the Court of Honour. The little princess took a seat between her father and me. To drive out she had put on an incredible necklace with bosses of diamonds and heavy emerald pendants. With her talismans round her neck in little gold boxes, with this necklace of light, and rings of precious stones in her ears, she looked like a too exquisite idol, motionless and silent. It was not till we were returning and the falling night hid her glittering jewels that she chirped a few words, and consented to give me her hand, and even sang a few crystal notes of a favourite song. A little princess of seven years who can already read and write, sew

and embroider, sing in time, and dance as lightly, I should fancy, as a butterfly with her tiny feet, that fidget in her gold slippers when she hears the music—though, frightened lest the Rajah should make her dance before me, she denied it altogether —a little princess, an only child, whom her father takes with him everywhere that she may see something of the world before she is eleven years old, for after that she will never leave her mother's zenana but to marry and be shut up in another harem.

On the road the people bowed low as we passed, almost to the earth. The women, in token of respect, turned their backs and crouched down.

In the prince's stables were a long row of brood mares and superb stallions; and then a hundred or so of colts were turned out into the yard—mischievous, frisking things, romping against each other, suddenly stopping short, and wrapped ere long in white dust, which fell on us, too.

The Prince of Morvi came before sunrise to take us to the temples of Satrunji. On the way we outstripped carts packed full of women and children in light shimmering muslins. They were all making a pilgrimage to the sacred hill, singing shrill chants in time to the jolting of their springless vehicles,

and broken by oaths and imprecations at the stoppages occasioned by our expedition.

The holy hill, bristling at top with the conical roofs of the pagodas, rises isolated in the vast stretch of silky grass, enclosed by a distant fringe of pale violet heights. At the foot of the ascent—in some places an incline, and in others a flight of steps going straight up to the temples—bearers were waiting for us, and an armed escort. A mob of pilgrims were shouting at the top of their voices, and did not cease their squabbling till we began the climb in our most uncomfortable palankins, etiquette forbidding us, alas! to get out of them. One of my bearers, almost naked, with a mere rag of white cotton stuff round his hips, had hanging from his left ear a ring with three pearls as large as peas and of luminous sheen.

Stations for prayer stand all along the road; little open shrines, where footprints are worshipped, stamped on flags of white marble, a large footprint surrounded by a dozen of a child's foot.

In front of us were men loaded with bundles or with children; old women gasping as they leaned on long staves; chattering women with green or pink or white veils, their arms full of sheaves of flowers. By each little temple—between which there are

kiosks, sheltering innumerable grinning idols—trees grow, and under their shade the pilgrims break the climb with a short rest. In a palankin, carried by two men, a slim woman's figure was borne past, in a pink gauze dress spangled with silver; her feet and hands, beringed with silver and gold, were exquisitely delicate. For an instant her veil blew aside, showing her face, rigid with horrible white leprosy, only her almond-shaped black eyes—beautiful eyes—were alive with intense brilliancy, full of unfathomable woe.

In front of a statue of Kali with a hundred arms, surrounded by rough votive offerings carved in wood, most of them representing legs, a man was pouring out rice, and a whole flight of grey *leilas*—birds like magpies—almost settled on his hands: birds of the temple, so familiar that one even allowed me to catch it, and did not fly away at once when I set it at liberty. There are rows of black Buddhas, white Buddhas, Sivas painted red—terrible—straddling in fighting attitudes; pilgrims without end bow and pray in front of each idol.

We reached the top of the hill, the sacred enclosure of the Jaïn temples. A stoppage again and a fresh dispute. The priests would not admit within the temples our soldiers, who wore shoes,

belts, and gun-straps made of the skins of dead beasts. The sowars wanted to go on, declaring that they would take no orders from "such men, priests with dyed beards, dressed in red flannel, with their turbans undone and heated with rage."

The heavy door, plated with iron, was shut. Hubbub, shouts, thumps on the wood with gun-stocks—nothing stirred, no reply.

I proposed to go in without the soldiers. Impossible, it was not etiquette! I was the Rajah's guest. The Prince of Morvi and I could not mingle with the crowd, our escort was necessary to isolate us. Well, then, the soldiers must take off their shoes, and leave their belts and guns at the door! Again impossible. Where would the prestige of the uniform be?

My friend T——, long a resident in India, and quite unmoved by the habitual turmoil of the native Hindoos, finally settled the difficulty between the cabbage of the priests and the soldiers' goat; the men would put on hemp-shoes, and we also, over our leather boots; as to the belt and gun-slings, as they only touched the soldiers themselves, they could defile nothing and might be allowed to pass.

So at last the door was opened.

On the very summit of the hill, all over the ravine which divided it from another, and which has been filled up at an enormous cost, and then on the top of that other hill beyond, temples are piled up, shining against the too-blue sky, with pointed roofs of stone, scorched by the sun or stained by the rain, and patterned with pale-hued lichens. Above each a spear stands up, impaling a metal ball. In infinite variety, differing in materials, style, and proportions, some quite small, as if they had sprouted round the base of others that are gigantic, there are here five thousand temples built by the faithful, who are incessantly erecting more, devoting great fortunes to the vanity of leaving a chapel that bears their name.

Spread before us in the iridescent atmosphere, the view extends over Palitana under its blue veil of light smoke, over the verdant plain chequered with plots of brown earth, and the winding ribbon of the Satrunji, a river as sacred to the Jaïns as the Ganges is to the Brahmins. And far away, vague in the distance, a light shimmering more brightly where all is bright, lies the luminou breadth of the sea.

Just within the enclosure to our right is a tomb. A Mohammedan who came forth to take the sacred

hill, the brother of an emperor of Delhi, fell dead at the foot of a Jaïn idol, which he had dared to touch with his staff. How the legend developed it is impossible to say; but this warrior, buried on the spot where he was stricken down by the divinity, has the miraculous power of curing barrenness in the women who invoke him. Votive offerings, little cradles daubed with yellow and red, are heaped on the pavement and hang to the railing.

A wide avenue paved with marble, rising in broad steps, crosses the hilltop between temples on either side, intersecting narrower alleys, likewise bordered with pagodas crowded together in the inextricable mazes of a labyrinth, whence our guides were frequently required to lead us out—temples crowned with a cupola or a cone, a bristling throng of little extinguishers all covered with carving. The same subjects and patterns are repeated to infinity, even in the darkest nooks: figures of gods, of gigantic beasts rearing or galloping, of monstrous horses and elephants, of tiny birds sheltering the slumbers of the gods under their outspread wings.

On the stone ceiling of almost every temple four large women's faces and certain crouching

gnomes appear in fresh red paint. In the very dim twilight that comes in through the narrow windows hung with blue gauze, the idols are visible behind lattices: white Buddhas blazing with sparkling gems that hang on their wrists and ankles, or form a perfect breastplate; and every one, without exception, has an enormous glittering imitation diamond in his forehead.

In the shrine of Chaumuc, the god of many faces, the four masks grin down from the sides of a square pillar of white stucco. The walls, vault, and pavement of this temple are all red, with borders of green and yellow; the colours scream in contrast to the whiteness of the images, with their staring eyes made of crystal balls that look like spectacles.

Another sanctuary holds an idol made of seven metals mingled to a pale golden hue. The statue is loaded with jewellery of silver and precious stones. On its head is a fan-shaped diadem starred with rubies. The walls and columns, of a dull purple, are decorated with gaudy mosaic of scraps of looking-glass set in brass along the lines of the mouldings.

Pilgrims crowd the courts and the temples. All, when they speak, hold a hand or a corner of their

robe before their lips to avoid swallowing the tiniest insect, which would avert the favour of the gods. They bring offerings of rice or gram in little bags of faded silk, pale pink, or green, and gold thread; the poorest have bags of red and white beads.

A very large temple, with its walls pierced in Persian patterns, contains fifty-two chapels behind pointed arches. In each chapel are four gods, all alike, of white plaster, all decked with the same jewels. In an angle of the vaulting a female figure, carved in the stone and wearing a tiara, holds an infant in her arms; this statue, with its long face and the rigid folds of the drapery, might have been transferred here from a gothic building.

A bulbul, flying out of a temple where it had been picking up the offered rice, perched on a pomegranate tree and began to sing, at first a little timid chirp, and then a ripple of song, soon drowned by the shrieks of parrots, which came down on the tree and drove out the little red-breasted chorister.

At the very top of the incline, the enclosing wall, black with age but bright with yellow velvet moss, rises precipitously above the plain, and three light balconies, with columns as slight as flower-stems,

crowned with pointed roofs recurved at the angles, overhang the abyss.

More and yet more temples, seen through the mist of weariness, the nightmare of grimacing idols, the heavy vapour of the incense burnt in every chapel, and of the flowers brought by the pilgrims. A dark red pagoda, lighted by a mysterious blue gleam falling intermittently from somewhere in the roof, enshrined a white marble god, whose glittering gems seemed to rise and fall behind the cloud of perfume that floated about him.

In another place two elephants of bright indigo, and some musicians all green, with red parrots on their wrists, are painted on the walls of a hall where the prayer-bell is incessantly tolled. Here many worshippers were prostrate. An idol, flanked by two statues on guard in stiff hieratic attitudes, was almost hidden under gold chains and a crown of inordinate splendour, while a priest, wearing only a loin-cloth, stood calmly sluicing the white plaster and putting the god through his toilet, sometimes splashing the congregation.

There is a very small and simple niche against the wall of a larger building, and in this, without even a railing to protect it, stands the image of a goddess robed in silk embroidered in gold; and in

such another little recess, not far away, is the sister of this divinity, also dressed in magnificent stuffs, renewed by the faithful at each high festival.

In a consecrated hall we came to a plaster image of a camel modelled over stone. To prove that you are without sin you must be able to pass under the beast, or at least between the front legs and the girth of the belly without touching any part; and so very narrow is this little gateway of Jaïn virtue that, to preserve my character in the presence of my escort, I did not attempt it.

Another temple—carved and pierced, and loaded and overloaded with ornament. In the crypt was a bas-relief representing the ceremony of marriage: the procession, the couple in front of the altar, the relations sitting round, all alike in the same crouching attitude, like toys set out by a little child. Then the model of a very famous temple elsewhere in India: columns, gateways, statues of the gods, all reproduced with microscopic exactitude down to the minutest details; and surrounding this tiny model a bas-relief of the most bewildering perspective—a plan of Satrunji with its fifty-two principal temples, its trees and sacred tanks; and as a pendant to this representation, a circular carving giving a bird's-eye view of the crowd, the same little doll-like figures

repeated again and again, coming to worship with arms and legs spread out, grovelling, as if they were swimming.

A large open niche, supported on massive columns and enclosed by a carved parapet, built by some king with a long, high-sounding name, looks as if it were made of gold; the stone is yellow and flooded with sunshine, which, where the hard material is not too thick, shines through and makes it seem transparent, with the peculiar vibrant glow of molten metal. The shadows, blue by contrast, are as soft as velvet; twinkling sparks are lighted up in the angles of the architrave, by the reflected rays, like stars in the stone itself.

On a square, shaded by an awning, with porticoes all round, coolies in white dresses sat on the ground making up little bunches of flowers, the blossoms without stems tied close to a pliant cane for garlands —jasmine, roses, chrysanthemums, and sweet basil— for in India, as in Byzantium of old, basil is the flower of kings and gods. The basil's fresh scent overpowered the smell of sandal-wood and incense which had gradually soaked into me in the presence of the idols, and cleared the atmosphere delightfully. A woman rolled up in pale-tinted muslins under the warm halo of light falling through the

awning, was helping one of the florists. She supported on her arm a long garland of jasmine alternating with balls of roses. Almost motionless, she alone, in the midst of the idols, at all reminded me of a goddess.

In the chief temple, whose walls were painted all over, a huge Buddha of gold and silver was hidden under wreaths of flowers round his neck, and a diadem of flowers on his brow, where blazed a luminous diamond; and flowers were arranged in a canopy over his head, and were strewn like a carpet on the steps of the shrine.

The fourteen hundred and fifty-two gods of the Jaïn paradise are represented on a sculptured pyramid under a pagoda: little tadpoles of white stone crowded together, two black dots showing for eyes in the middle of the round featureless faces; on one side a more important god, sitting alone, has a rather less elementary countenance.

A very solid structure, with walls like a fortress, contains the treasury of the sacred mount. Five guards in turn came to open as many padlocks, and at last the ponderous door turned slowly on its hinges. A car, an elephant, and a vehicle to which are harnessed two prancing horses, are all brought out to convey the idols when they go forth in a

procession. The animals are chased with almost artistic skill. The harness, starry with precious stones, all takes to pieces.

Near one pagoda, where the highly venerated footprints of Adishwara are preserved, a tree—a *gran* tree—was cut down to the root, and, as the legend tells, grew again in a single night as large as it now is; and it would grow again if it were again felled, to screen with its shade the holy spot touched by the god.

Beyond the outermost wall, when we had at last left it behind us, at the foot of the pile of terra-cotta-coloured bricks, were vast tanks of stagnant water, said to be inexhaustible. Near them was a shrine to Siva, with two small idols hung with yellow flowers, where an old Hindoo was praying devoutly; and then through a park of giant trees, and shrubs bright with strange blossoms, over which the parrots flew screaming.

As soon as we returned to Palitana the Rajah sent to inquire after me, and to present me with round boxes of fruit preserved in Cashmere, oval green grapes, each wrapped separately in cotton and smelling of honey.

One of my sepoys was lying asleep in the veran-

dah of the bungalow. A variety of articles hung from his belt: an antelope's horn made into a powder-flask, several tassels of red and green silk threaded in a row, a triple chain of copper serving to hang up lamps in front of the sacred images, a small damascened knife in a crimson velvet sheath, and a tiny yellow earthenware bottle containing kohl.

In the courtyard a tall and gaudy cock was keeping the crows in order, driving them relentlessly away from the kitchen precincts. On the roof of the servants' quarters, always in the same spot, perched a kite, ready to pounce as soon as anything was thrown out. The doves, the house-pigeons, the fowls fled at once and squatted in corners; but the cock stood his ground, his feathers all on end, his crest erect, chuckling with rage and stalking round the yard within ten paces of the bird of prey.

In the afternoon the Rajah wore a pale green dress embroidered with gold and gems, and sparkling with stones, and a wide rose-coloured sash fringed with pearls. He wore no jewels but priceless diamond buckles in his shoes. As I had lingered long in the morning at a jeweller's shop, the prince wished to show me his possessions. Servants, as solemn as gaolers, brought in many trays covered

with enormous emeralds cut into beads and strung on white cords, necklaces of pear-shaped pearls threaded on almost invisible silk. And then, from among the goldsmith's work, modelled into impossible flowers and chimeras twisted to make heavy anklets, from among coat-buttons, rings and sword-guards sparkling with diamonds, the Rajah took up a costly snuff-box and begged me keep it as a remembrance.

The elephant of ceremony, covered with a velvet cloth embroidered with gold, on which was placed a massive silver howdah edged with gold, was in waiting to take me for a ride. Round the beast's neck hung a huge necklace of balls as large as apples and long pendants from his ears, all of silver, tinkling as he moved and glittering in the sun. The mahout rested a ladder against the elephant's head for me to mount by, and we set out, following the Rajah and escorted by sowars, to the very modern tennis club of Palitana.

The game had begun. The prince's cousins, dressed in light white muslin, seemed to fly as they ran after the ball in the fluttering of the diaphanous stuff.

The guards' band played Indian tunes, to a measure I could not yet catch, and Strauss' waltzes very oddly accented. Suddenly the princess appeared,

in soft rose-pink lightly touched with blue. She wore a pearl necklace with slides of ruby and emerald, shoes thickly worked with gold, and a broad pink sash somewhat darker in colour than her silver-striped tunic.

Evening fell, purple and orange tinging the princes' muslins to delicate hues; then very quickly all was dark. Deep melancholy came over us; we all sat without speaking a word, while from afar came the clatter of tom-toms from the temple, sometimes drowning the music, which droned on in a minor key, a maundering strain without a close but constantly repeating itself.

The Rajah, a prisoner in his little state, a ruler only in name and deposed from his power, as I rose to take my leave, cast a glance of deep melancholy towards a last golden beam that quivered on the sacred hill, and seemed to awake from a dream.

BHAWNAGAR

The little palace of Nilam Bagh, panelled inside throughout with carved wood, looks like a jewel-casket dropped in a vast park of green shade and

broad lawns. Rawl Shri Bhaosinhji, Rajah of Bhawnagar, is very young, almost a child, and still very shy, dressed in the European fashion in a long grey overcoat, with a voluminous turban of turquoise-blue gauze.

As soon as he had bid us welcome, bunches of chrysanthemums were presented to us tied round a little stick. The Rajah hung garlands of jasmine round our neck, and a servant sprinkled us with otto of roses. The conversation turned on Europe, which Rawl Shri regards as a land of marvels, where fairy-like manufactures are produced and extraordinary forces have subjugated nature. He, like his cousin of Palitana, has a passion for horses, and he took me to visit his stud.

On the edge of a pool, where, like a huge, full-blown lotus flower, stands a kiosk of sculptured marble, dedicated to the Rajah's mother, we came upon the shoe market, the last survival of a time not so very long ago, when shoemakers, as working on the skins of dead beasts, dared not come within the precincts of a town.

It was a miserable assemblage of booths and tumble-down dwellings, crowded round a sumptuous old palace with porticoes carved with divinities. The new town consists of modern buildings, devoid of

style, the residence of wealthy Parsee merchants. Here are libraries, archives—all kinds of offices, which seem so useless here, and which, till I was told what they were, I took to be a prison.

A long train of wailing women, loud in lamentation, came slowly out of a house where one lay dead whom they had just been to look at, on their way now to wash their garments, defiled by contact with the body. But all dressed in red, with gaudy embroidery in yellow, white, and green, and large spangles of looking-glass glittering in the sun, they did not look much like mourners.

Really the prison this time! in the midst of a large enclosure with high walls; a building on a star-shaped plan, with large windows to admit air and daylight. The prisoners, in a white uniform, with chains on their feet, were manufacturing various articles in basket-work, and in a shed with a cotton awning a hundred or so of convicts were weaving carpets. The brilliancy of colour was indescribable; the vividness of the medley of worsted piled by the side of the gorgeous looms, the light hues of the dresses, the faded turbans touched with light, the glitter of the steel chains, the bronze skins, glorified to gold in the quivering sunshine, which, scarcely subdued by the awning, bathed the

scene in a glow so intense that it seemed to proceed from the objects themselves. Behind each loom sat a warder, with the pattern of the carpet on his knees, dictating the colours to the weavers, chanting out his weariful litany of numbers and shades in a monotonous voice.

A poor old fellow, behind a grating that shut him into a kind of hovel, called out to us, first beseeching and then threatening, rushing frantically to the back of his hut and at once coming forward again with fresh abuse. He was a dangerous madman, placed there to keep him out of mischief and to be cured by the Divinity.

In the bazaar I sought in vain for the petticoats embroidered with rosettes, flowers, and elephants pursued by tigers, such as the women wear here; these robes are made only to order and are not to be found. Then Abibulla simply asked a beggar-woman to sell me hers. The poor creature, hooted at by some old gossips, retired into a corner to undress, and, wrapped in the packing-cloth in which she had been carrying some rags, brought me the petticoat.

A tame white antelope was wandering about the garden of the old rajahs' palace, under a shower of gardenia-like flowers that hung by a stem

scarcely thicker than a thread. The whole of one avenue was strewn with this snow, on which the graceful little beast, with its large sad eyes, was feeding. Further on, under some other trees with red blossoms, stands a little mausoleum built by the prince over Jacky, his dog, "who was faithful and good."

Some native lancers were manœuvring; they charged at top speed in a swirl of golden dust, which transfigured their movements, making them look as though they did not touch the earth, but were riding on the clouds. They swept lightly past, almost diaphanous, the colour of their yellow khaki uniforms mingling with the ochre sand; and then, not ten yards off, they stopped short, with astonishing precision, like an apparition. Their lances quivered for an instant, a flash of steel sparks against the sky—a salute to the Maharajah—and then they were as motionless as statues.

The regiment is housed under sheds, the horses picketed to the ground by one fore and one hind foot. They are thoroughbred and magnificent beasts, almost all from the prince's stud, and affectionately cared for by the men, who were delighted to be complimented on their steeds.

A New Year's dinner this evening at the Guest Bungalow. The prince, forbidden by his religion to eat with men who are not of his own caste, was represented by Mr. S——, the English engineer at Bhawnagar.

The long table was filled with officials and their wives, as happy as children—pulling crackers at dessert, putting on paper caps, singing the latest music-hall nonsense; while outside, jackals whined, suddenly coming so close that they drowned the voices and the accompaniment on the piano.

At the railway station a woman, who would accept no gratuity, strewed flowers on the cushions of my carriage, and put garlands along the grooves of the open windows—bunches of ebony flowers, of Indian cork-flowers, lilies, and China roses on the point of dropping, only hanging to the calyx by the tip of the petals.

In the distance, across the plain, herds of deer were feeding, and hardly looked up as the train went by.

At a station where we stopped, a man with a broad, jolly, smiling face got into the carriage. He was a juggler and a magician, could do whatever he would, and at the time when the line was opened

he threatened that if he were not allowed to travel free he would break the trains into splinters. The officials had a panic, and the authorities were so nervous that they gave way; so he is always travelling from one station to another, living in the carriages.

He came into ours as if he were at home, and amused himself by worrying me. At first he made believe to throw my rings out of window, substituting others, I know not how, which I saw fall on the line and roll into the grass on the bank. My watch got into his hands and vanished; I found it in my friend T——'s pocket, and afterwards in a basket of provender closed at Bhawnagar, and which I unpacked with my own hands.

The man was dressed in blue and silver, his belt studded with four-anna pieces; hanging to his girdle was a whole array of small knives, sheaths, and boxes. With his sleeves turned up to his elbows, he fairly amazed me, conjuring away into the air eight rupees that filled his hand, and finding them again one by one in our pockets, bags, or plaids. He turned everything topsy-turvy, swaggered as if he were the master, and then went off, with his broad smile, to amuse other travellers.

At another station, a man, standing on the carriage step, held out a broad sheet to a servant, the two ends falling to the ground. Then a lady stepped out, hid herself under the stuff, which wrapped her from head to foot, and walked along the platform with a woman-servant. She was the wife of some superior clerk, not rich enough to have a palankin, but of too high caste to uncover her face—a white bundle tottering along the platform. One of her antelope-skin slippers came off; for a second a tiny foot was put out with silver anklets. The woman put her mistress's shoe on again, and then both went to the waiting-room reserved for ladies.

BOMBAY

A town in mourning. In the suburban stations, so crowded but three weeks since, there was nobody, and nobody in the train we travelled by. No coolies for the baggage, no carriages, and the tramcars running down the wide, deserted road carried no passengers. The hotel was closed, all the servants had fled in terror of the plague, which was raging with increased violence. Every shop

had the shutters up; the great market, full of golden fruit and shaded by the flowering trees, was equally empty, and in the bazaar the rare wayfarers hurried by in silence.

In the evening at Byculla, in the street of the disreputable, in front of a house hermetically closed, and painted with a round red spot for each person who had died there, a fire of sulphur was burning with a livid glow. Only one gambling-house tried to tempt customers with a great noise of harmonium and tom-toms; and from a side street came a response of muffled tambourines and castanets. First the dead, wrapped in red stuff and tied to a bamboo, and then the procession turned into the lighted street. White shapes crowded by, vanishing at once, and the harmonium again rose above the silence with its skipping tunes, and the tom-toms beating out of time—and attracted no one.

HYDERABAD

At night, in the crowded station, a guard of honour was waiting, composed of sepoys. There was shouting among the crowd, a fanatical turmoil, a storm of orders, and heavy blows. Some great

magnate got out of the train, surrounded by secretaries and officers. The soldiers, bearing torches, attended him to his carriage; they remounted their horses, following the vehicle, in which a light dress was visible. Very fast, and with a great clatter, they rode away into the silent night fragrant with rich scents; they were lost under the trees to reappear in the distance on a height, the torches galloping still and the smoke hanging in a ruddy cloud above the bright steel and the white cruppers. Then, at a turn in the road, they all vanished.

Beyond the new town of broad avenues planted with trees and bordered with gardens, was a brand-new bridge of gaudy bricks over a river, almost dry, where a swarm of naked natives were performing their ablutions—washing linen and shaking out red and white cloths, as far as the eye could see. Buffaloes lying in the mud were sleeping among the tame ducks, the ibis, and the herons, all seeking their food. An elephant plunged into the water, splashing it up and scaring thousands of bright birds, which flew up against the intensely blue sky.

A tall wide gate beyond the bridge opens into the ferocious fortress of Hyderabad.

Soldiers, bristling with daggers and pistols in their belts, are on guard at the gate. Pikes and long muskets stand piled in the background; over this arsenal, flowering jasmine and convolvulus with enormous bell flowers hang their graceful shade.

In the streets, swarming with people, every woman who is not a pariah, walks veiled in all the mystery of her unrevealed features, her long, dreamy eyes alone visible.

Country folks bring in cages of birds full of the poor little fluttering things, which are bought by children and by many men, captive at the end of a long string; pretty black-headed bulbuls, so bold in the land of the Buddhists, and victims here to the Moslems.

A palankin, hung with heavy red curtains, went by very quickly, borne by five men. They chanted a sort of double-quick march, marking the time with a plaintive sigh and a slight bend of the knees, which gave their pace the appearance of a dance, the litter swaying very gently.

A spell seemed to linger over this little bazaar, to slacken every movement and give the people an indolent grace. They spoke languidly in the shade of the awnings spread by the flower-sellers and the jewellers, who, with little ringing taps, were ham-

mering out minute patterns on silver anklets and necklaces.

Traversing the narrow avenues that intersect the bazaar, we came to a series of quiet courts; here were the police-station, the small barracks, and stables for camels and elephants. In a blind alley we found a white mosque, where men were praying robed in pink and green; while opposite, below a house consisting of three stories of arcades, some Syrian horses, as slender as gazelles, were exercising on the bright-hued mosaic floor of the open stable.

Between the houses tiny garden-plots full of flowers surround gravestones, on which fresh roses are constantly laid.

Elephants came along, stepping daintily, but filling the whole width of the street, looking, with one little slanting eye cocked, as if they were laughing at the foot-passengers who were compelled to squeeze against the wall.

Presently three beggar-women came up to sing from door to door. In their arms, like babies at the breast, they carried shapeless idols painted red, bedizened with spangles and gilt paper. They wailed out a ditty repeated again and again, knocked perseveringly at the doors, insisting on alms; and

then, when they had received it, they touched the threshold with their blood-coloured puppets and departed.

In the shops the salesmen, to weigh their merchandise, had a strange collection of curious weights —dumps, rings, balls of copper, iron, or lead, stamped or inlaid with symbols and flowers; fragments of spoons to make up too light a weight, even pieces of wood; and they used them all with perfect readiness and never made a mistake.

Where the roads cross there are basins where flowers are kept fresh, and above them white pigeons are always fluttering. Public scribes, squatting cross-legged on the ground, trace letters that look like arabesques, on rice-paper, with a reed pen. Those who dictate them crouch beside them with an absorbed and meditative expression, dropping out the words one by one with long pauses between.

Then some men go past who have a stick like a distaff thrust through their belt with a net wound round it; they net as they walk, heedless of jostling, their eyes fixed on their work.

In the distance is the great mosque which no unbeliever may enter; the doors stand wide open. The only ornaments on the white walls are the lamps, hung with red. In the court of the mosque,

under magnificent trees, are the tombs of the Nizams, with stone lattices, jewellery of marble, fragile pierced work, whereon wreaths of pale flowers are wrought with infinite grace. Near these tombs are two large fountains, where a crowd of men were bathing, talking very loud; and a large basin of porphyry full of grain was besieged by grey pigeons.

All round the mosque, in narrow alleys, are more and yet more tombs, strewn with roses and enclosed in little plots. Some stand out in the street unenclosed, like milestones.

There was a children's garden-party to-day in the grounds of the English Resident; a crowd of fair-haired babies, excessively *Greenaway* in their long, light frocks with bright-hued sashes. They shouted with joy at the swings and wooden horses, clapping their hands when it came to their turn to ride the elephant that marched about the park—so fair, so bright, with their nurses or Indian ayahs wrapped in crude showy muslins.

And as they went home at nightfall enormous bats came out and flew across above the tall trees in heavy, steady, straight flight. Without a sound they made for the last gleam on the horizon, where

the vanished sun had left a crimson line; and what an insistent image of death and oblivion were those great black fowl, slowly flapping their five-fingered wings spread out round their bodies, headless as they would seem, so small is the head, and so close-set on the neck. One might fancy that they were bearing away the day, gliding noiseless and innumerable towards the west, where already the last gleam is dead.

Outside the fortifications is a peaceful township of large gardens with row on row of tombstones and mausoleums; some of enormous size, palaces of the dead, and others smaller, but wrought like lace-work of stone. For a league or more the necropolis lies on both sides of the road. Across the door of each mausoleum hangs a chain by the middle and the two ends.

But this suburb is now no more than a heap of huts and hovels. The tombs, ruined and overthrown, are few and far apart, heaped with sand, and showing as arid hillocks amid the level of withered grass. The plain beyond, laid out in rice-fields of a tender green, furrowed with silver streamlets, spreads unbroken to the foot of a huge wall of the hue of red gold enclosing a hill; and on

entering the precincts, behold, in the bays of the thickness of the wall, a whole village where dwell the families of the soldiers who guard this citadel.

An inner fortress, another portal held by armed men, and a walled enclosure, is Golconda, the former capital of the sovereigns of the Deccan. The entrance is through a magnificent archway of gigantic proportions; to close it there are two gates of heavy wood studded all over with long iron spikes, against which, during a siege, elephants charged to their death.

All round the Royal Hill ancient buildings are piled in stages, the remains of still majestic magnificence. The thorn-brakes cover supporting walls as broad as crenellated terraces; fragments of light and fantastic architecture stand up from amid golden blossoms; tottering colonnades overhang tanks, all green at the bottom with a pool of brackish water.

At an angle of the stairs of violet-tinted stone, which lead to the summit of the hill, a tablet of green marble, engraved in flowing Arabic characters, remains uninjured, the record of the great deeds of some emperor of Golconda.

At the top, facing two immense rocks that look like couchant lions, there was another palace; one

wall alone is left standing; on the creamy marble a peacock spreads its tail, carved into very delicate sprays and flowers.

The view spread to the horizon of mauve-pink sky, very faintly streaked with green. We could see the white mass of Secunderabad, a town of English barracks, at the foot of chaotic red-brown rocks, looking like the heaped-up ruins of some city of the Titans; and among trees shrouded in blue smoke, Hyderabad, conspicuous for its two mosques—the tomb of the Empress and the Jumna Musjid, the mausoleum of the Nizams.

Further yet lay the artificial lake of Meer Alam, reflecting the palace of Baradari and the russet plain, infinite as far as the eye could reach towards the north, where other superb mausoleums were visible in their whiteness.

At our feet were the two walls, the outer wall enclosing the palace, the gardens, the arena, where fights were given between elephants and tigers; the inner wall, ten metres high, built round the zenana—the women's palace—of which even the foundations have almost disappeared under the overwhelming vegetation.

Mystery broods over this ruined past; grandeur seemed to rise up in the sunset glow. We went

down the hill, while behind us a saffron haze veiled the Royal Hill, effaced every detail of architecture, and shed over all an amethystine halo.

It was melancholy to return under the gloomy, spreading banyans, through the dimly-lighted suburbs, where the people were still at work and selling their wares; and the dungeon, the dead stones, the guns now for ever silenced and pointed at vacancy, were lost in blue darkness.

Our last evening at the Residency, where I had spent days made enchanting by music.

The servant who came to tell me that dinner was served went barefoot, like all native servants, in spite of his livery—a sash and a shoulder-belt arranged over the Indian costume, and bearing the arms of England, and a monogram placed in his turban.

He appeared without a sound, visible only as a white figure, his brown face lost, effaced in the gloom of the dimly-lighted room. For a moment I had a really uncanny sensation at this headless apparition, but in an instant there was the gleam of a row of brilliant teeth, the light in the eyes, and the eternally smiling face of the household coolie.

On quitting Hyderabad, to the right and left of the iron road, the landscape was for a long way the same; rocks, that looked as if they had been piled up and then rolled over, lay in russet heaps among peaceful little blue lakes without number, breaking the monotony of the wide, scorched fields, a sheet of pure gold. At one of the stations a beggar was rattling his castanets furiously, and singing something very lively and joyous. At the end of each verse he shouted an unexpected "Ohé!" just like the cry of a Paris ragamuffin.

Here in southern India the women wear hardly any trinkets, and their garb consists of sarongs and sarees, so thin that their shape is visible through the light stuff. In their hair, which is knotted low on the neck, they stick flowers, and occasionally light trailing sprays fall down on the throat. They all have gold studs screwed into the two upper front teeth; hideous are these two red-gold teeth among the others, sound and white under young lips!

Then, on the right, endless pools and rivers; naked men were ploughing in the liquid mud and splashed all over by the oxen drawing a light wooden plough, their bronze bodies caked ere long with a carapace of dry, grey mud.

The rice, lately sown, was sprouting in little square plots of dazzling green; it was being taken up to transplant into enormous fields perpetually under water. All the "paddy" fields are, in fact, channelled with watercourses, or if they are on higher ground, watered from a well. A long beam is balanced over the mouth of the well, and two boys run up and down to lower and raise the bucket; a man tilts the water into the runlets out of a large vessel of dusky copper, or perhaps out of a leaky, dripping water-skin.

The ripe rice, in golden ears, is cut with sickles; a row of women in red gather it into sheaves, which men carry on their back, at once, to the next village, and there it is threshed out forthwith on floors but just swept.

And so, on both sides of the way there are rice-fields without end; those that were reaped yesterday are ploughed again to-day.

As we went further south Moslem tombs became more and more rare; the lingam was to be seen here and there among the rice-fields: a gross idol made of stone and looking like a landmark, set up under a tree or sheltered by a little kiosk. Soon temples of Vishnu were seen, raising their

pyramidal piles of ten stories to the sky. Amid the cool shade of palms and bamboos, close to each temple, was a fine tank with steps all round it; and surrounded by this magnificence of architecture and vegetation Hindoos might all day be seen bathing, dwellers in hovels of plaster or matting, sometimes in mere sheds supported on sticks, within the shadow of the splendid building full of treasure, in which the god is enshrined.

Birds, green, red, black, and gold-colour, fluttered gaily among the palms, the bamboos as tall as pine trees, the baobabs and mango trees; butterflies with rigid tails and large wings beating in uncertain flight, floated over the bright verdure flecked with sunshine. Round one pagoda, towering over a wretched village that lay huddled in the shade of its consecrated walls, a proud procession of stone bulls stood out against the sky, visible at a great distance in clear outline through the heated, quivering air.

A kind of grey snipe, as they rose to fly, spread white wings which made them look like storks or gulls, and then, dropping suddenly, became dull specks again, scarcely distinguishable on the margin of the tank. Ibis, on the watch, with pretty, deliberate, cautious movements, stood on one leg,

their bodies reflected in the mirror on which lay the lotus and the broad, frilled leaves of the water-lily, and a sort of bind-weed hanging from the edge in festoons of small, arrow-shaped leaves, with a crowd of tiny pink starry flowers that looked as if they were embroidered on the water.

The country was nowhere deserted. Labourers in the rice-fields were transplanting the young seedlings or watering the taller growth that waved in delicate transparent verdure. Or again, there were the watchers perched on their platforms in the middle of the fields; fishermen pushing little nets before them, fastened to triangular frames, or grubbing in the mud in search of shell-fish—small fresh-water mussels, which they carried away in clay jars of Etruscan form. A motley crowd, with animated and graceful gesticulations; the women red or white figures in fluttering sarees, with flowers in their hair, and a few glittering bangles on their arms; the children quite naked, with bead necklaces and queer charms of lead or wood in their ears or their nose; the men slender and active, wearing light-coloured turbans made of yards on yards of twisted muslin, their brown skin hidden only by the langouti or loin-cloth.

Along the line were hedges of glaucous aloes, of

gynerium all plumed with white, and over every plant an inextricable tangle of *baja*, its pink flowers hanging in bunches.

Fields of betel pepper, broad-leaved and fleshy, carefully enclosed with matting, were watched over by two or even three men, armed with heavy cudgels.

Under an enormous banyan tree, far from any dwelling, two fine statues of an elephant and a horse seemed to guard an image of Siva, rigidly seated, and on his knees an image of Parvati, quite small, and standing as though about to dance.

Images of horses recurred at intervals, singly, or in pairs face to face; and as evening came on we saw round a pagoda a whole procession of horses in terra-cotta, some very much injured, arranged as if they were running round, one after another, in search of the heads and legs they had lost.

Near a small station oxen were filing slowly past. On their heads were hoops hung with bells, and little ornaments at the tips of their horns dangled with quick flashes of light.

The evening was exquisitely calm, shrouding everything in rose-colour, and shedding a light, opalescent golden haze on the pools and streams. And out of this floating gauze, in the doubtful light, white figures seemed to emerge gradually,

only to vanish again in the pure, transparent atmosphere of the blue night.

Over the rice-fields, in the darkness, danced a maze of fire-flies, quite tiny, but extraordinarily bright; they whirled in endless streaks of flame, intangible, so fine that they seemed part of the air itself, crossing in a ceaseless tangle, faster and faster, and then dying out in diamond sparks, very softly twinkling little stars turning to silver in the moonlight.

Between the tracery of bamboos, behind clumps of cedars spreading their level plumes of fine, flexible needles, we still constantly saw the roofs of temples involved in clouds of tiny phosphorescent sparks weaving their maze of light; and the clang of bells and drums fell on the ear.

TRICHINOPOLY

High on a hill, one with the rock, are built the temples, up to which is a flight of steps hewn in the stone itself. At every stage, or nearly, are little shrines with images of Ganesa, the elephant-headed god, or of Ananta, the sacred serpent, decked with flowers, the *mindi* flower, which has

a strong scent of pepper. In some places the whole temple, as vast as a cathedral, is hewn out of the hillside; the columns in elaborate and intricate patterns, the niches and altars wrought with inconceivable toil and patience, not a scrap added or stuck on. In the dim distance is a huge red statue of Siva, wreathed with flowers.

The colouring in all these rock-temples is a softened harmony of yellow stone, hardly darkened in some places, forming a setting for the gaudier tones of the idols, all sparkling with gold and showy frippery.

One of these halls, almost at the top of the mount, accommodated a school. The elder pupils sat on stools by the master's side; the little ones and the girls, in groups of five or six, squatted on mats in the corners; and all the little people were very quiet in the atmosphere of sandal-wood and flowers brought as offerings, read gravely out of big religious books, and listened to the Brahmin as, in a deep, resonant voice, he chanted a sort of strongly-marked melody. There was scarcely an ornament on the light-coloured walls, pierced with deep windows showing foliage without; and among the dead whiteness of the mats and the school-children's draperies there was but one bright light,

the bell over the pulpit, surmounted by the sacred bull in bronze, of precious workmanship.

From the summit we looked down over a panorama of the town, set out in square blocks sunk in the verdure of palms, bamboos, and banyans. At our feet was the cupola of the temple of Siva, all gold, and covered with bosses, the edges of the mouldings catching the sun. Besides this a number of coloured domes, painted in pale shades faded by the sunshine, descended the almost perpendicular incline down to the bazaar, where the throng was beginning to stir like white ants, of slow gait and deliberate gestures, their light-hued dhoutis flitting about the stalls for drink and fruit. Far away, beyond the bright green rice-fields, and against the horizon of intensely blue hills, the rocks stand out—French rocks and Golden rocks—where the treasure of the conquered natives was distributed to English soldiers. It might almost be fancied that a glow of metal still shines on the smooth stone, a warm, yellow stone bathed in sunshine.

A Catholic church flanking the Jesuit college persistently sent up to us the shrill tinkle of a little bell, rattling out its quick, harsh strokes like a factory bell for workmen.

At the bottom of the steps, almost in the street, was another school at the entrance to a temple. The children, in piercing tones, were all spelling together under the echoing vault, a terrible noise which seemed to trouble nobody.

On reaching the temple of Vishnu, on the very threshold, we met an elephant marching in front of the Brahmin priests, who were carrying water in copper amphoræ to bathe the idols withal. Musicians followed the elephant, playing on bagpipes, on a kind of little trumpet, very short and shrill-toned, and on drums; and the beast, with its trunk swaying to right and left, begged a gift for the expenses of the temple.

The priests slowly mounted the stairs, the music died away in echoes more and more confused, ceasing at last, while the sacred animal, going off to the right at the foot of the steps, disappeared into its stable.

In the island of Srirangam we visited a temple to Vishnu, enclosed within eight walls, of which the three first only contain any dwellings. A crowd of pilgrims swarmed about the steps, where everything was on sale: little gods in bronze, in painted marble, in clay, and in wood; paper for

writing prayers on; sacred books; red and white face-paints, such as the worshippers of Vishnu use to mark their foreheads with a V; little baskets to hold the colours, with three or four divisions, and a mirror at the bottom; coco-nuts containing kohl; stuffs of every dye; religious pictures, artless indeed, and painted with laborious dabs of the brush in the presence of the customer; chromo-lithographs from Europe, sickeningly insipid and mawkishly pretty.

Ekkas, and *chigrams* closed with thick curtains, came galloping past with loud cries from within. All was noise and a shifting of many colours, seeming more foolish here, in this large island, with its deserted avenues of tall trees, than anywhere else.

A portico, supporting two stories of an unfinished building, forms the principal entrance; the pilasters are crowned with massive capitals scarcely rough-hewn in the stone. This porch alone gives an impression of repose, from its simplicity of line amid the medley of statues and incongruous ornaments loaded with strong colours, which, diminishing by degrees, are piled up to form each temple, ending almost in a spire against the sky. Vishnu, reclining on the undulating rings

of Ananta Sesha the god of serpents, whose name is the Infinite; idols with human faces riding on bulls, and elephants, and prancing horses; terrible Kalis with two fists rammed into their mouth, and six other arms spread like open wings; Ganesa, the elephant-headed god, ponderously squatting, his hands folded over his stomach; Garudha, the bird-headed god, ridden by Vishnu when he wanders through space; Hanuman, the monkey god, perched on a pedestal in an acrobatic attitude, the face painted bright green; gods of every size and every colour mixed up in a giddy whirl, round and round to the very summit of the structure.

In one of the inmost circles, a sacred elephant had gone *must*, breaking his ropes, and confined now by only one leg. The chains fastened round his feet as soon as he showed the first symptoms of madness were lying broken in heaps on the ground. The brute had demolished the walls of his stable and then two sheds that happened to be in his way; now he was stamping a dance, every muscle in incessant motion, half swallowing his trunk, flinging straw in every direction, and finally heaping it on his head. A mob of people stood gazing from a distance, laughing at his heavy, clumsy movements; at the least step forward they

huddled back to fly, extending the circle, but still staring at the patient. In an adjoining stable were two more elephants very well cared for, the V neatly painted in red and white on their trunks, quietly eating and turning round only at the bidding of the driver; but one of them shed tears.

Inside the temple long arcades connect the shrines sunk in the thickness of the walls, gloomy recesses with images of Vishnu and other idols; where the corridors or arcades cross each other there are vast halls with a sculptured roof supported by thousands of columns. In one of these halls there is a chariot full of divinities. The wheels, the horses, the highly-venerated images, are all of marble very delicately wrought, and amazing after the coarse caricatures on the outside. In the courts again, under sheds, there are cars; one of enormous size in black wood carved with innumerable figures and interlacing patterns; pendant ornaments of the same wood sway in the wind. The solid wheels, without spokes, small and having huge axles, seem made not to turn, and the shafts, to which a whole army of the faithful harness themselves on the occasion of a high festival, are long and as thick as masts.

Another car, past service, lay slowly rotting in a corner; almost all its images had vanished, and its canopy had fallen off; it was almost completely hidden under aristolochia in blossom.

MADURA

Wide strands of golden sand; here and there among the rice-fields the palms and bamboos are less crowded. In the moist air, that grows hotter and hotter, the daylight is blinding, hardly tolerable through the blue glass of the windows. Scorched, russet rocks stand up from the short grass, tremulous in the noontide heat. The cattle, the very birds, silent and motionless, have sought shelter in the shade; all the people have gone within doors. And then, towards evening, in an oasis of gigantic trees, amid bamboos and feathery reeds, behold the huge temples of Madura, in sharp outline against a rosy sky.

The sun had just set, a violet haze was rising and enwrapping every object. Fires were being lighted in the villages on the road to the holy place. Tom-toms were rattling in the distance,

and nearer at hand a *vina*, gently touched by an invisible player, murmured a tune on three notes.

The temples were already closed, but my servant, Abibulla, diverted the attention of the gatekeeper, and I stole unseen into the outer precincts.

Within the gateway, carved all over with foliage and rosettes, a footway, paved with bright mosaic, leads to the interior of the temple. All along a corridor, enormous prancing horses, mounted by men-at-arms, support the roof which is deeply carved all over, and at the foot of these giants a sacred tank reflects the sky. In front of us, were gaps of black shadow, and far, far away, lamps, shrouded in incense, were twinkling behind the gratings.

Figures draped in pale muslins brushed past us, hastening to the door. Flower-sellers, in one of the arcades, were hurrying to finish their garlands; and suddenly, close before us—a mass that looked as if it were part of the temple itself—an enormous elephant started into sight, passed on and vanished in the darkness.

In the depths of little recesses the lamps twinkled feebly before images crowned with flowers. At the entrances to shrines little glass lamps, like a mysterious fairy illumination, followed the lines

of the arabesques, sparkling like glowworms, without lighting up the passages which remained dark, and in which, in fact, we finally lost ourselves.

Near the statues, which are placed in a row close to the wall, other statues, finer, slenderer, and more graceful, stood before the pedestals, anointing the stone with some oil which in time soaks in and blackens it, or else hanging lanterns up over the divinities. These were the temple servants, wearing nothing but the langouti tied round their loins; they either shuffle about barefoot, or remain motionless in rapt ecstasy before the little niches where the idols grin or scowl among branches of roses and amaryllis.

In one brilliantly-lighted hall, priests, dressed in long yellow dalmatics, were adoring idols, elephants, Anantas; and from an enormous gold lotus sprang the *Mandeel*, rising through the dome, its tip standing in the outer air to bear the white flag that is hoisted on high festivals. At the entrance to this shrine parrots in cages suddenly set up a hostile outcry as I passed them, and were only pacified by the coming of a priest, who gave them some food. The clatter, however, had attracted other Brahmins; one of them desired me to leave, "and

at once." I declined to obey, so he sent for the elephant who does duty as police, to turn me out.

And as the priests knew that the beast would need no help they again left me to myself. Up came the elephant at a brisk trot, flourishing his trunk and hooting; within two yards of me he stopped and stood still. He accepted a four-anna piece that I offered him, and handed it up for his driver, but finding no one on his back he put the coin back into my pocket, and sniffing all over my coat found a biscuit, ate it, and then quietly went back to his stable.

A muffled sound of instruments, mingling in confusion in the myriad echoes, came dying on my ear, hardly audible. A gleam of light flashed in the corridor and then went out. Then some lights seemed to be coming towards me, and again all was gloom. An orchestra of bagpipes, of *kemanches* and darboukhas sounded close by me, and then was lost in the distance, and the phantasmagoria of lights still went on. At last, at the further end of the arcade where I was standing, two men raised green-flamed torches at the end of long poles, followed by two drummers and musicians playing on bagpipes and viols. Children squatting on the ground lighted coloured fire that

made a bright blaze, and died out in stifling smoke, shrouding the priests—a cloud hardly tinted by the torches.

A golden mass, an enormous shrine chased all over and starred with tapers, now came forward, borne by a score of naked men. Against the gold background, in a perfect glory of diamonds and pearls, sat Vishnu, decked out with flowers and jewels, his head bare with a huge brilliant in his forehead.

The music played louder, light flashed out on all sides, the god stood still, and bayadères performed their worship. With slow gestures, their hands first hollowed and held to the brow, then their arms flung out, they bowed before the idol with a snake-like, gliding motion, while the music played very softly and the lights burnt faintly. The *nauchnees*, in dark muslin drapery spangled with gold, bangles on their arms, their necks, and their ankles, and rings on their toes, swayed as they danced, and swung long, light garlands of flowers which hung about their necks. And there were flowers in their hair, in a bunch on each side of the head, above two gold plates from which hung strings of beads. The flying, impalpable gauze looked like a swirl of mist about their limbs.

Very gradually the measure quickened, the pitch grew shriller, and with faster and freer movements the bayadères were almost leaping in a sort of delirium produced by the increasing noise, and the constantly growing number of lights.

Then, in a blaze of coloured fire, a *fortissimo* of music, and a whirlwind of drapery, they stopped exhausted in front of the idol. The lights were put out, the tom-toms were the only sound, and the procession moved on, escorting the shrine which glittered for some time yet, till it disappeared at an angle, leaving the temple in darkness just tinted blue by the moon.

A different scene indeed next day, with none of the magnificence of yesterday, was the temple of magical lights. There was a dense crowd of shouting and begging pilgrims. Along the pyramidal roofs, as at Srirangam, there were rows of painted gods, but in softer and more harmonious hues. Over the tank for ablutions was a balcony decorated in fresco, representing in very artless imagery the marriage of Siva and Parvati. The couple are seen holding hands under a tree; he a martial figure, very upright, she looking silly, her lips pursed, an *ingénue*. In another place Siva sits with his

wife on his knees, she has still the same school-girl expression. Finally, on the ceiling, is their apotheosis: they are enthroned with all the gods of Ramayana around them, and she looks just the same. The red and green, subdued by the reflected light from the water, were almost endurable.

Immediately on entering we were in the maze of vaults, sanctuaries, great halls and arcades, where stall-keepers sell their goods, priests keep school, and flower-sellers wander. Statues, repeated in long rows, lead up to temples all alike, of a bewildering uniformity of architecture and identical decoration.

Elephants, freshly painted, go past begging.

Making my way among the too numerous gods in relief against the overwrought walls heavy with carving, I came to a wonderful balcony where, in broken cages, I found the parrots that had betrayed me, and among them an exquisite pale yellow cockatoo of great rarity.

One after another I made my salaam to Siva, seated on a peacock; to Ganesa, looking calm and knowing; to Parvati, riding a bull; to Siva again, this time pinning a dragon to the ground with a fork, a writhing reptile with gaping jaws and outspread wings; the same god again, with a child in

his arms; and again, holding his leg like a musket up against his shoulder with one of his four hands, the other three lifting a bull, a sceptre, and a trophy of weapons above his head.

In a central space was a hideous rajah, a benefactor, with his six wives, all gaudily coloured with jewels in coloured paper stuck on to the images, and all kneeling in attitudes of idiotic ecstasy, doubly absurd under the daubing of vermilion and indigo. These were greatly admired by my servant, a convinced connoisseur in Indian art. Further on we saw, on the ceiling of a polychrome corridor, monsters carved to fit the shape of squared beams ending in a griffin's or a bird's head.

In a dirty stable, strewn with withered plants, stood some forlorn, sickly-looking beasts, the sacred bulls of Madura.

Here again the cars of the gods were neglected in the open air, and one of them, older than the rest, was fast being transfigured into a pyramid of shrubs and flowers.

Two men were quarrelling; one had robbed the other. The dispute went on endlessly, and no one, not the priest even, had succeeded in pacifying them. At last an elephant was fetched; he came up without being noticed by the disputants, and trumpeted

loudly just behind them. The thief, convinced that the animal in its wisdom had discovered his crime, took to his heels and fled.

In the afternoon, while it was still broad daylight and very bright outside, it was already dusk under the arches of the temple, and bats were flitting about.

And under an arcade priests were hanging the shrine with wreaths of pink and yellow flowers, in preparation for its nocturnal progress, while an old woman, all alone, was bathing in the tank, with much splashing and noise of waters.

The old palace of the kings is now yellow-ochre, coated with plaster and lime-wash over the splendid antique marble walls.

The rajah's sleeping-room has at one end a dais ascended by three steps; here the sovereign's bed used to be spread; and here, now, the judges of the Supreme Çourt have their seats. In the middle of the room was a confused array of benches and tables, and against the walls, also washed with yellow, hung a series of portraits of bewigged worthies.

From the roof, consisting of terraces between cupolas, there is a view of many temples glorified in the golden sunset, and nearer at hand stand ten

imposing columns, very tall—the last remaining vestiges of the rajah's elephant-house.

TUTICORIN

A desolate strand, all the vegetation burnt by the sun and the sea-breeze. The pearl-oyster, which made the fortune of the district, disappeared four years since, and has migrated to other parts. The fisheries no longer pay, and the boats are dropping to pieces on the beach, while the divers beg, decimated by want.

An old man who sold us some shells, had, in the days of prosperity, made a little fortune by charming the sharks with spells and signs that kept them away from the boats, and from the naked and defenceless pearl-fishers as they plunged into the deep to seek the precious shells.

COLOMBO

A port crowded with steamers taking in coal, and very light barks high out of the water, kept in equilibrium by parallel outriggers at the ends of two flexible spars. These crank boats, made of

planks that scarcely overlap, were piled with luggage, and the boatmen jostle and turn and skim close under the fast-steaming transatlantic liners, amid a bewildering babel of shouts and oaths, under a sun hot enough to melt lead.

On the landing-stage we read in large letters: "Beware of sunstroke," and lower down, "Avoid it by buying the best umbrellas and the best pith helmets of John Dash." The streets are the commonplace highways of a commercial town; the houses tall, with shops below. Dust and light alike were blinding; jinrickshaws were passing to and fro, drawn by almost naked coolies running as fast as horses.

The Cingalese women, of languid gait, wear a long dark robe clinging about their legs and reaching to the ground. The poorer women have only a scanty saree to complete the costume; the more wealthy display stockings and boots; a white bodice cut low, with open sleeves and no basque leaves a roll of skin visible between the skirt and the bodice. The men wear a long loin-cloth of English trouser-stuff, a white jacket buttoned over the bare skin, and a twist of back hair like a woman's, in which they stick a celluloid comb, coronet-fashion—such a comb as is used in Europe

to keep the hair back from a child's forehead. And all the race are too slender, too pliant, their eyes too long and slightly darkened with kohl; the boys especially have an unpleasant, ambiguous look.

In every shop of the High Street jewellers are on the look-out for customers, hale them in, tease them to buy, and open for inspection little bags or cardboard boxes kept in safes, and containing the finest sapphires in the world. The day slips by in bargaining for the gems, in endless discussions and feigned departures. The indefatigable vendors return to the charge, run after the customer, wait for him at the door of a rival dealer, and drag him back again. Then there is a fresh dispute over prices, till irresistible argument at last brings down the estimates to a third or a quarter of what they were at starting.

KANDY

Inland from Colombo it is pure enchantment to travel among the rich and tangled vegetation of every shade of green that grows by the margins of the pools, the rivers, and the rice-fields. At first, skirting the shallows, where men, standing to their waists in water, were fishing with large nets which

they managed but clumsily, the flat banks are overgrown with anthuriums, their broad leaves of dark velvet or of light gauze splashed with rose and white, mirrored in the channels that form a network to irrigate the rice-swamps. Then ferns, bamboos, and feathery reeds in every varying shade of gold; creepers clinging to the trunks of coco trees or phœnix-palms bear bunches of pink or yellow blossoms between the palm-leaves, invading everything with their luxuriance, and forming a gaudy undergrowth below the tall trees—a light but impenetrable thicket where the sun casts warm purple shadows.

Higher on the hills, amid the rich bright verdure of the tea-plantations, we find magnolias, pines, and the Campeachy medlar, all wreathed with climbing plants and invaded by the young growth of palms, by rattans which have succeeded in piercing the awning of parasites that hangs, starred with flowers, from tree to tree—flowers like lamps shining among the ripe coco-nuts, mango fruit, and papaws.

Beyond a wide valley that lay far beneath us a mountain-range gleamed softly in the blue distance, starry and sapphire-hued above rising levels of delicate green. Here, in the fresher air, floated the fragrance of mosses and alpine flowers, and above the

cascades falling in showers we could see the tangle of climbing plants, ferns, orchids, and hibiscus, a swaying curtain all woven of leaves and blossoms.

A plantation of theobromas (cacao), carefully enclosed and tended, with their puckered leaves, and fruit-pods as large as an ostrich egg hanging from the trunk and the larger branches, seemed quite melancholy, like wild things tethered.

Then some gardens looking like hothouses, concealing bungalows, and a gleaming lake among the greenery—and this was Kandy.

In front of a Buddhist temple were somé tanks in which enormous tortoises were swimming. On the building, above carvings of elephants in relief on the stone, were a number of mural paintings, artless and terrible scenes set forth with the utmost scorn of perspective and chiaroscuro: a place of torment where green monsters thrust the damned against trees of which the trunks are saws, and enormous red and yellow birds devour living victims.

Inside the temple was the fragrance of fresh flowers, brought as offerings, with grains of rice threaded like semi-transparent beads on the flexible pale green stem. A huge Buddha here, of many-coloured stones bedizened with gold, gleams in the

shade of the altar, and two bonzes in front of the idol were quarrelling at great length, with screams like angry cats and vehement gesticulations, for the possession of some small object which constantly passed from one to the other.

Adjacent to this temple was the court-house, a hall of ancient splendour in the time of the kings of Kandy. It stood wide open, the walls lined with carved wood panels. The court was sitting under the punkhas that swung with regular monotony, the judges robed in red. One of the accused, standing in a sort of pen, listened unmoved to the pleading. A large label bearing the number 5 hung over his breast. Behind a barrier stood other natives, each decorated with a number, under the charge of sepoys. One of them, having been wounded in the murderous fray for which they were being tried, lay at full length on a litter covered with pretty matting, red and white and green, stretched on bamboo legs. A long robe of light silk enveloped his legs, and he alone of them all had charming features, long black eyes with dark blue depths, his face framed in a sort of halo of silky, tangled hair. He, like the man now being sentenced and those who had gone through their examination,

seemed quite indifferent to the judges and the lawyers. He mildly waved a palm leaf which served him as a fan, and looked as if he were listening to voices in a dream, very far away.

An interpreter translated to the accused the questions put by the judge, who understood the replies, though he was not allowed to speak excepting in English.

Then a fat native lawyer began to speak, and silence fell on the crowd of three or four hundred listeners sitting behind the accused, as if they were in church. The monotonous voice went on and on, urging every plea.

Even more than the assembly of their relatives and friends, the prisoners at the bar maintained the impassive mien of men who attach no disgrace to a sentence pronounced by a conquering race; they would take the penalty without a murmur, as one of the inevitable incidents of this life, which to them is but a stage, a passage to a higher existence.

The song of birds in the mitigated atmosphere of the dying day came in from outside, for a moment almost drowning the pleader's weariful tones as he poured forth his statement, emphasized by sweeping gestures.

In the mystery of a polychrome temple, whose walls are closely covered with sculptured bas-reliefs of gods in the shape of men or animals, is a relic, the sacred tooth of Buddha; and all about the precious object, which is enclosed in a series of shrines within impenetrable walls, there is no sign of respect, but all the noise and bustle of a fair, a perfect turmoil of hurrying, chattering folk, whose only anxiety is to keep unbelievers away from the sacred spot.

The forest round Kandy is glorious, an exuberance, a crush of trees growing as thick as they can stand, the dense tangle of boughs and leaves outgrown by some enormous *ficus*, or tall *terminalia*, whose sharp, angular roots have pushed through the soil while its trunk, twisting in a spiral, has made its way to a prodigious height, ending a thick dome of foliage. This, again, is overgrown by delicate creepers decking the green mass with their flowers. Spreading banyans, with a hundred stems thrown out like branches and ending in roots, form colonnades of a rosy grey hue like granite, and might seem to be the vestiges of some colossal church with a dark vault above, scarcely pierced here and there by a gleam of blue light from the sky beyond. Among these giants of the forest dwells a

whole nation of bending ferns as pliant as feathers, of clinging plants hanging in dainty curtains of flowers from tree to tree. Sometimes between the screen of flowers a bit of road comes into view, deep in impalpable brick-red dust, of the same tint as the fruits that hang in branches from the trees.

A kind of lemon plant, with picotee-like flowers of a texture like crystalline pearl, its petals delicately fringed, exhales a fresh scent like verbena. Then, on an ebony-tree, overgrown with succulent leaves forming an edging to every bough, is a bird —as it would seem—a lilac bird, with open wings, which, as we approach, turns into an orchid.

Above a large fan-palm the pale fronds of a talipot soar towards the sky, gracefully recurved like enormous ostrich plumes. A fluff, a down, of flowers clings to the stems of the magnificent crest, a delicate pale cloud; and the broad leaves of the tree, which will die when it has blossomed, are already withering and drooping on the crown. Then, in the clearings made by the recent decay of such a giant, falling where it had stood, and crushing the bamboos and *phœnix* that grew round its foot, the flowers sprang in myriads—great sunflowers, shrubs of *poinsettia*, with its tufts of red or white bracts at the end of a branch of green

leaves, surrounding a small inconspicuous blossom, and tall, lavender-blue lilies.

There was not a sound, not a bird, excepting on the fringe of the forest. As we penetrated further there soon was no undergrowth even on the dry soil, between the ever closer array of trees; the creepers hung very low, tangled with clinging parasites; and between the stilt-like and twining roots and the drooping boughs, the path, now impracticable, suddenly ended in face of the total silence and black shade that exhaled a strong smell of pepper, while not a leaf stirred.

Colombo again; and again the jewellers and their blue stones—an intoxicating, living blue.

In the harbour, where there was a light breeze blowing, the little outrigged canoes had hoisted large sails, white edged with black, and vanished into the distance, skimming like winged things over the intensely blue water.

Men were carrying mud in enormous turtle-shells that they used for baskets.

Little beggar-girls with a depraved look, artful little hussies, pursued us coaxingly: "Give something, sahib, to pretty Cingalee girl, who wants to go over sea to where the gentlemens live."

MADRAS

The city produces an impression as of a town built in the clouds and then dropped, scattered over the plain with vast arid and barren spaces left between the houses. In the native and Moslem quarters, indeed, there is a crowd of buildings, closely packed, crammed together on quite a small plot of ground; and among them the electric tramway runs its cars, useless just now, and empty of travellers, for it is the beginning of Ramadan, and the Mohammedans in broad daylight are letting off crackers in honour of the festival.

In the hotel compound—more absurd than all the rest, lost in a waste of open land beyond the seething native town—there was a swarm of coolie servants, their wives and their children, who played all day at climbing about the coaches put up under the trees. And, without ceasing, a maddening hubbub of laughter and crying came up from this litter of brats, more weariful than the silence of vacancy all around.

The draught-oxen all had their horns painted

in gaudy colours, generally one horn blue and the other green.

In the evening, in the open street, we came upon a circle of bystanders all beating time, while in the midst four little girls were dancing, wearing the sarong, but naked to the waist. They leaned very much over to the right, resting the right elbow on the groin, clapping the right hand with the left, and throwing back the left leg. All four did the same, round and round, and this went on again and again without a pause, under the pale light of the stars filtering through an enormous banyan tree. Occasionally a woman among the crowd would give a slow, long-drawn cry, and the dancers answered in very short notes, piercingly shrill.

In the native town, on a tank in front of a temple, a raft was moving very slowly. Under a dazzlingly gorgeous canopy stood an idol of gold, covered with garlands and jewels. A dense crowd, white and fragrant with jasmine and sandal-wood, stood about the sacred pool and on the steps, and bowed reverently as the divinity floated past.

One old man, indeed, bowed so low that he fell into the water, and all the worshippers shouted with laughter.

The streets were hung with gaudy flags and

coloured paper. Altars had been erected, four poles supporting an awning with flounces of bright-coloured silk, and under them a quantity of idols, of vases filled with amaryllis and roses, and even dainty little Dresden figures—exquisite curtseying *Marquisss*, quite out of their element among writhing Vishnus and Kalis.

That evening, near the temple where the god, having left the tank, was receiving the flowers and scents offered by his votaries, there was howling and yelling from the crowd of Hindoos, all crushing and pushing, but going nowhere. And louder yet the noise of the tom-toms, which the musicians raised to the desired pitch by warming them in front of big fires throwing off clouds of acrid smoke.

In one tent there was a display of innumerable gilt images, very suggestive of Jesuit influence—mincing, chubby angels, martyrs carrying palm-branches, and ecstatic virgins with clasped hands, all serving to decorate the shrine in which the god was to be carried back to the temple. Coloured fires lighted the workmen, and in the background the temple was darkly visible, with only a few dim lamps shrouded in incense, and burning before Rama, whose festival was being kept.

The god having been placed in the shrine, which was enormously heavy, and took a hundred men to carry it, the procession set out. First two drums, then some children burning coloured fire and whirling fireworks round above their heads. Three oxen with housings of velvet, richly embroidered in gold, carried tom-tom drummers, and behind them came the priests and the god, hardly visible among the lights and flowers on the shrine. A breath of awe fell on the crowd as the divinity came by; they bowed in adoration with clasped hands and heads bent very low.

To light the way, coolies carried long iron tridents tipped with balls of tow, soaked in oil. The mass moved slowly forward through the people, suddenly soothed to silence. The procession paused at the wayside altars, and then, in the middle of a circle formed by the torch-bearers and coloured lights, the sacred bayadères appeared—three girls with bare heads, dressed in stiff new sarongs heavy with tinkling trinkets, and an old woman crowned with a sort of very tall cylindrical tiara of red velvet embroidered with gold. Very sweet-toned bagpipes and some darboukhas played a slow tune, and the dancers began to move; they spun slowly round, their arms held out, their bodies kept rigid, except-

ing when they bowed to the shrine. The crude light of the red fire or the sulphurous flare of the torches fell on their glittering ornaments, alternately festive and mysterious, shedding over the performance an atmosphere at once dreamy and magically gorgeous.

Then all went out, died gently away; the tom-toms and pipe attending the god's progress alone were audible in the silence; till in the distance a great blaze of light flashed out, showing a crowd of bright turbans and the glittering splendour of the shrine going up the steps to the temple where, till next year, Rama would remain—the exiled god, worshipped for his wisdom which enabled him to discover the secrets, to find the true path, and win the forgiveness of his father.

The doors were shut; all was silence—the stillness of the star-lit night.

Many hapless creatures here suffer from elephantiasis, and even quite little children are to be seen with an ankle stiffened, or perhaps both the joints ossified; and the whole limb will by-and-by be swollen by the disease, a monstrous mass dreadfully heavy to drag about. Other forms of lupus affect the face, and almost always, amid a crowd watching

some amusing performance, a head suddenly appears of ivory whiteness, the skin clinging to the bone or disfigured by bleeding sores.

Steaming over the transparent and intensely blue sea, we presently perceived an opaquer streak of sandy matter, getting denser, and becoming at last liquid, extremely liquid, yellow mud—the waters of the Ganges, long before land was in sight. Between the low banks, with their inconspicuous vegetation, a desolate shore, we could have fancied we were still at sea when we had already reached the mouth of the sacred stream. Some Hindoos on board drew up the water in pails to wash their hands and face, fixing their eyes in adoration on the thick sandy fluid. Enormous steamships crossed our bows, and in the distance, like a flock of Ibis, skimmed a whole flotilla of boats with broad red sails, through which the low sun was shining. The banks closed in, the landscape grew more definite — tall palm trees, plots of garden ground, factory chimneys, a high tower. On the water was an inextricable confusion of canoes and row-boats flitting among the steamships and sailing barks moored all along the town that stretched away out of sight.

CALCUTTA

An aggressive capital! Palaces of concrete and stucco washed with yellow stand cheek by jowl with commission agencies and hovels, and all without a suspicion of style, not even giving one the impression of a southern city. In the streets, thick with dust, an all-prevailing turmoil as of a fair is prolonged to the latest hours of night. Red uniforms and "young England" tourist suits ending their career in rags on half-breed coolies—a wearisome staleness and total effacement of local colour, worse than commonplace; and then, above all, a very strong and nauseating smell of lotus and tallow, with an after-gust of something peppery and acrid.

In the street of native shops the possible purchaser is attacked by storm, every voice yelps out prices. The dealers scrambled into my carriage with a whole catalogue of bargains poured out in a mixed lingo, and with such overpowering insistence that I had to fly. An electric tram-car, provided with a loud bell that rings without ceasing, runs through the suburbs, a dirty swarming quarter

where the streets are alive with naked children, fowls and pigs wallowing in heaps of filth and the mud made by watering the road.

Past a magnificent railway station, and through a manufacturing district of tall furnaces, we came to the quiet country and the Ganges, bordered with gardens, where creepers in flower hang over the muddy stream stained with iridescent grease and soot.

Round the railway station crowds the village of Chandernagore, the huts close together, with no land to spare, and at length we were in the city of houses, with broad terraces in front in a classic style, with colonnades and decorations in relief, and broad eaves overhanging for shade. And beautiful gardens, bougainvilleas, and almond trees, white-blossomed faintly touched with pink, hedge in streets with foreign-sounding names. The air was full of the fresh scent of water and greenery and of the blessed peace of silence—so rare in India.

The cathedral, embowered in shrubs and tall banyans, stands on a square, where a pedestal awaits the bust of Dupleix.

A stone parapet runs along the river road, and below it the grassy bank slopes gently to the clear and limpid stream of the Ganges. On the shores

of the sacred river fine trees overshadow many idols, and fresh flowers are constantly laid at their feet.

In the city, which is swept and cleaned till it is hard to believe oneself among Hindoos, there are six hundred tanks, for the most part stagnant, in which the natives wash themselves and their clothes. Round others, which are gradually being appropriated to the use of the residents, and all about the houses, bamboos are planted and "flame of the forest," covered with enormous red star-shaped blossoms as solid as fruit, and trees curtained with creepers of fragile growth—one long garden extending almost to the bazaar.

At night the sound of a remote tom-tom attracted me to a large square shaded by giant trees. In a very tiny hut made of matting, a misshapen statue of Kali, bedizened with a diadem, a belt, nanparas, and bangles made of beads and gold tinsel, stood over a prostrate image in clay of Siva, lying on his back. In front of this divinity, under an awning stretched beneath the boughs of a banyan tree, two nautch-girls in transparent sarees were dancing a very smooth sliding step to the accompaniment of two bagpipes and some drums. The Hindoo spectators sat in a circle on the ground—a white mass

dimly lighted by a few lanterns—and sang to the music a soft, monotonous chant.

Then a man rose, and standing on the bayadères' carpet, he recited, in verses of equal measure, a sort of heroic legend, making his voice big, and emphasizing his words with grand gesticulation. One of the dancers spoke the antistrophe, and this went on interminably, till their voices gradually sank to mere hollow and expressionless intoning, while they swayed their bodies to and fro like children who do not know their lesson.

Then the dancing began again, interrupted for a minute by the call of the night-watchman as he went past carrying a long bamboo. He paused for a moment to watch the performance, and then was lost in the darkness.

At last, when it was very late, the reciter lifted the heavy idol on to his head. A few worshippers followed him, carrying the flowers, the little jars and the baskets offered to the goddess, and the procession marched off towards the Ganges; while the nautch-girls went on with their performance, giving loud, sharp shrieks out of all time with the shrill but somnolent music.

The bearer of Kali walked into the sacred river up to his knees, and then dropped the idol. The

Hindoos who had followed him fell prostrate in fervent prayer, hiding their face in their hands, and then flung after the goddess, now lost in the waters, all the baskets, jars, and flowers, to be carried down the stream. For a moment the silver paper crown which had floated up spun on the water that was spangled by the moon, and then it sank in an eddy.

The people came back to the dancing, which went on till daylight. The music could be heard in the distance, drowned from time to time by the yelling of the jackals or the watchman's call, and it was not till daybreak that the drumming ceased.

In the little white church, all open windows, mass was performed by a priest with a strong Breton accent. During the sermon, to an accompaniment of parrots' screaming and kites' whistling, there was a constant rustle of fans, which were left on each seat till the following Sunday. The church was white and very plain; French was spoken, and little native boys showed us to our places on benches. Old women in sarees were on their knees, waving their arms to make large signs of the cross. A worthy Sister presided at the harmonium, and the little schoolgirls sang in their sweet young voices

airs of the most insipid type; but after the incessant hubbub of bagpipes and tom-toms their music seemed to me quite delicious, raising visions in my mind of masterpieces of harmony and grace.

In the afternoon—calm and almost cool—I went to call on the Resident, who talked to me of India in the days of Dupleix, of its departed glory, and the poor old fort of Chandernagore, once impregnable and now demolished under the provisions of treaties; and as we walked on through the town, between gardens that look like the great parks of the French kings, all the past seemed to live again on this forgotten spot of earth, and every moment, in the silence of the purple dusk, I could have fancied that I saw in the avenues, under the tall phœnix palms, the shades of powdered *marquises* in skirts with full farthingales, and of gallant knights of St. Louis; then from a far distance came the sound of a piano—some simple melody quavering in the air that was so full of memories.

DARJEELING

Beyond Siliguri, where we left the main line, a little toy railway, going very slowly, jostles the travellers across rice plantations and woods of giant trees, under whose shade tree-ferns expand on the banks of the streams. By the side of the water springs are hung prayers written on strips of rice-paper that flutter in the wind from the shrubs and bamboos, mingling with the blossoms of rhododendron and funkia, spots of bright colour showing against the forest of mighty cedars and sycamores and gloomy palms. Clinging to the highest branches, orchids like birds are to be seen, and from bush to bush hang bright green threads covered with white stars, tangled into hanks and hooked on to every thorn. The vegetation of banyans, phœnix, and other tropical plants gradually becomes mixed with oak, box, and plane trees, and then disappears altogether as we get higher; and presently, as we pass through a belt of great dark firs, the shrubs, the mosses, and even the flowers are those of Europe. Higher up, the mountain side is mapped out into lines and squares, green and russet, looking from a distance

like ribbed velvet; these are the tea plantations. The horizon grows broader, spreading away and out of sight towards the vision-like mountains forming the outposts of the Himalayas; up to the very verge of the eternal snows they are cultivated in the same rib-like strips, all tea plantations; and amid the shrubs are the little factories where the precious leaves are dried, and villages of little homesteads lost among the greenery, or peeping through the opalescent haze, intensely blue under the pure, cold sky and crude sunshine. The natives here wear skins with the fur inside; the leather outside is patterned with red or blue cloth. Men and women alike go about in felt boots, which give them an unsteady and straddling gait.

Above Darjeeling — a modern and fashionable health-resort, a town of villas, for the most part with corrugated iron roofs—hangs a dense mist, cutting off the horizon at a distance of a few miles; and through the dull substance of this fleece, at an impossible height, there was a reflection —a mirage, an illusion, a brighter gleam, a bluer shadow, which might be the top of a mountain; but so high up, so far away, and above all so transient, that it failed to fix itself on the memory, blotted out at once by the pallid wall that shut

in the scene. But at sunset one thickness of the haze melted away, unveiling, leagues on leagues away, a chain of giant mountains, not yet the snowy peaks, but bright-hued cliffs on which gold and purple mingled in symphonies before dying into violet, turning to blue in the moonlight; and the mists fell once more—a shroud at our feet, an abyss of shadows, in which the tea-planters' lamps twinkled through the darkness.

In the sleeping town of Darjeeling a bell and drum were sounding to announce the Tibetan Christmas. The Brahmin paradise remained invisible and mysterious behind a clear sky studded with stars.

Next morning—so far, so high on the horizon! I saw a pink spot; then, as day broke, the rose colour spread—broader, lower, turned paler, then to white, and the Himalayas lay before me in blinding glory of size and light. Kinchinjunga, at a measureless distance, looked in the clear air as if it were quite close; and round the sovereign giant other giants rent their wrappings of cloud, an amphitheatre of peaks of dazzling whiteness lost against the sky, and almost insensibly fading away behind the vapour that rolled up from the abysses, grew

thicker, and settled into a compact mass over the lost summits, hiding the nearer heights and shrouding Darjeeling in opaque white fog.

Round a temple, with iron roofs ending in copper balls at the top, a crowd was watching, some seated on steps cut in the soil and some squatting on the hillside, here almost perpendicular. By the temple long white streamers, fluttering from bamboo poles, were covered with painted prayers. A Lama was enthroned in an armchair under an arbour of pine-branches; he wore a yellow robe, and above a face like a cat's he had a sort of brass hat surmounted by a coral knob; his little beard was quite white, and he turned his praying machine with a steady, dull movement, perfectly stolid. Two women stood by his side fanning him, dressed in close-fitting aprons of dark cloth bordered with a brighter shade, and opening over pale pink satin petticoats, on their heads crowns of flowers of every hue.

Four women and two men wearing masks stretched in a broad grimace—one of the men in a red satin robe edged with leopard-skin, while the other had a squalid white shirt, intentionally soiled, over all his clothes—then began to dance round the priest, stopping presently to spin very fast on one

spot, and the girls' skirts floated gracefully in heavy folds, showing their under-skirts of bright satin embroidered with silver and gold. One of these women, who were not satisfied with painting their faces, by way of adornment, on the nose and cheeks with blackened pig's blood, took off her mask, showing her whole face smeared with it. She and the man in the dirty shirt played a number of mountebank's tricks to the great delectation of the spectators, and she finished amid thunders of applause by seating herself on the Lama's knee and stroking his beard.

Cymbals and kettle-drums formed the orchestra, reinforced by the shrill cries and strident laughter of the spectators.

Whenever there was a pause in the dance the performers, to amuse themselves, sang a scale, always the same, beginning on a very high note, or sometimes taken up from the lowest bass pitch, and marking time with their stamping feet.

Far up the hill, and for a long time, the clanging brass and sharp cries followed me on my way all through the afternoon, and I could picture the dancing women, the Lama under his gleaming brass hat, turning his praying-wheel beneath his bower of branches and papers fluttering in the wind; and

not till dark did the whole party break up and go back to Darjeeling; the poorer women, on foot, all a little tipsy, danced a descending scale that ended occasionally in the ditch; the richer ladies, in thin dark satin robes with wide sleeves all embroidered in silk and gold, and their hair falling in plaits from beneath a fillet of red wood studded with large glass beads, fitting tightly to the head, rode astride on queer little horses, mostly of a dirty yellow colour, that carried them at a brisk amble. Their husbands, extremely attentive, escorted the dames, some of whom gave noisy evidence of the degree of intoxication they had reached. The least blessed had but one husband, or perhaps two; but the more fortunate had a following of as many as six eager attendants, whom they tormented with incessant scolding.

Off at four in the morning, led by a Mongol guide with a broad expressionless yellow face. My steed was a perfect little devil of a horse of a light coffee colour.

I rode to Tiger Hill. Overhead hung a dense mist, like a roof of shadow, perfectly still, wrapping us in damp and frightfully cold vapour. After two hours' ride in the darkness we reached our destina-

tion. Suddenly the cloud fell like a curtain pulled down, the sky appeared, and then the earth at our feet became visible in the starlight. Some vestiges of a temple could be discerned among the grass—the foundations of enormous halls, and still standing in solitude, the brick chimneys in which the devout were wont to burn their prayers, written on rice-paper. Far away, in the transparent air, above a wall of grey cloud — the dull, dingy grey of dirty cotton-wool—a speck showed as a beacon of lilac light, of the hue and form of a cyclamen flower; this turned to rose, to brick-red, to warm gold colour, fading into silver; and then, against the blue sky, showed immaculately white. This was Gaurisankar—Mount Everest—the top of the world, appallingly high, inconceivably vast, though lost in the distance, and seen from a hillock three thousand metres above the sea.

After the giant a whole chain of lavender and rose-coloured peaks turning to blue came into sight in the marvellously clear atmosphere; then the sun rose below us, in the throbbing tide of heat the mountains seemed to come closer to us, but immediately the mist gathered about Gaurisankar. "The Apsaras wearing impenetrable veils, that mortals may not gaze too long on the throne of the gods,"

said my saïs, who had fallen on his face since the first appearance of the snow-crowned colossus, with hands upraised towards the paradise of Indra.

For another minute the sublime ice-peak remained visible through the gauzy whiteness, and then a cloud rising from beyond the range descended on the heights and gradually enfolded the whole chain.

As we returned, vistas of unreal definiteness showed us endless valleys lost in the distance, and vast spaces cultivated in green and russet stripes—the tea plantations that spread below the now vanished splendour of the snows. At a turning in the road stands a cross, erected there in memory of an epidemic of suicide that broke out among the soldiers of the English fort—a small structure of stone with an iron roof that faces the heaven-scaling range.

Towards noon the mass of Kinchinjunga again lifted its head above the clouds, now white with a dust of rosy gold or violet on the snow in the shadows; and again, as the clouds swept across, of every changing tint of steel and copper, pearl and sunshine, till, following on the ardent glory of sunset, a purple and living fire, like a flame within the very substance of the ice-fields, all died into

mysterious blueness under the broad pure light of the moon.

All the day long a solid blue mass melting into rain hid the mountains and darkened the nearer view; and our return journey was made between two grey walls, through which the trees, which sometimes met in an arch overhead, were but dimly visible.

At the railway station thousands of people had collected to take leave of a great turbaned moollah from Mecca, dressed in yellow silk. Long after we had left Darjeeling the faithful ran by the side of the carriage to kiss his hand, on which blazed an enormous diamond cut in a cone; and all along the road, when the train going downhill went too fast for anyone to keep up with it, Moslem natives bowed and prostrated themselves in the road, shouting words of Godspeed to the holy man. And at one stopping-place a little carpet was spread, on which he took off his shoes and prayed—hurried through his last prostrations by the whistle of the locomotive.

At night, when the fog had at last cleared off, a column of fire was piled up on the engine; it shone

on the smooth trunks of the "flame of the forest," which looked like the pillars of a cathedral, on the sparkling water-springs all hung about with prayer-strips, on the veronica shrubs covered with flowers and as tall as trees, and the sheaves of bamboo and fern; or it lighted up the hanging screen of creepers, the impenetrable jungle growth that shut in the silence of the sleeping forest.

BENARES

Yellow palaces, mirrored as gold in the luminous waters of the Ganges, came into view; cupolas quivering with dazzling lustre against the intense sky—and then the whole city vanished. Nothing was to be seen but a suburb of shabby buildings, the commonplace railway station crowded by a Burmese pilgrimage of Buddhists come from so far —who knows why?—to the holy Indian city. Yellow priests and white doll-like figures dragging bundles that fell open, dropping the most medley collection of objects to be picked up and stowed into the parcels again, only to roll out once more. A yelling crowd, hustling and bustling, shouting from one end of the station to the other, and finally

departing, like a flock of sheep, in long files down the dusty road, to be lost at last in the little bazaar.

All along the narrow streets, paved with broad flagstones up and down in low irregular steps, stand the five hundred temples of Benares, and between them houses with carved stone porticoes. The ochre-coloured stone, of which they all are built, is toned in places by a coating of reddish purple, faded by the rain and sun to pale flesh-colour, with an undertone of the yellow wall; and this takes on a glow as of ruby and sunset fires in the watery ripple reflected from the river—a mingling of every hue of intense sunshine, filtering through the awnings spread over the balconies—a glory of repose, tender and clear, which seems to emanate from the objects themselves, and to envelop them in a fine powder of light.

Squeezed in and crushed between houses that tower above it, rises the pointed dome of Biseshwar Matti, covered with leaves of chased gold; smaller cones surround the principal dome, bristling with tiny pyramids of gold, carved into flowers round statues of Kali with her eight arms, of Ganesa, and of peacocks with spread tails. Under this splendid cupola, dazzlingly bright against the sky,

the temple itself is quite small, and strictly closed against the unbeliever. Some pious hands had hung chains of jasmine and roses above the entrance, and they gave a touch of beauty to the stonework, very old, and soiled with large stains of oil. A sense of intense piety hangs about this sanctuary, subdues every voice, and bends the head of every passer-by in reverence of the mystery, and they all bring flowers.

Under an arcade, lightly tinted with faded colours, and supporting a heavy stone roof elaborately carved, a marble bull stands facing the well which Vishnu touched when he came down from heaven. This is the Court or Well of Wisdom.

Two fakirs, squatting in a corner, gazed at the sacred stone, their bodies rigidly motionless; they did not seem to be of this world, rather to be statues of gods themselves; their eyes alone were alive—burning.

Further on, in the temple stables, open to the sky and surrounded by a colonnade of carved and painted pillars, some women, in silken sarees of dark hues, were waiting on the bulls and the tiny zebu cows, feeding them with the flower offerings strewn on the mosaic pavement of the courtyard.

From the top of the observatory, where instruments, all out of order, are to be seen on the deserted terraces, a staircase in a half-circle of stonework leads straight up to the open sky, and there the eye is dazzled by the view of Benares, all spread out below: the vast city of yellow stone, the cupolas of its temples, and its palaces stretching far along the Ganges, which slowly rolls its milky green waters under a sky of almost pearly whiteness; and in the distance the grassy plain of bright emerald green, lost on the horizon that throbs with the heat. Everything was wrapped in a halo rather than a haze, faintly blue with the smoke that went up from the funeral piles of the Hindoo dead.

One of the servants of the place, sitting in the shade of the arcade, was painting, after a strange method. He sprinkled powdered colour on the surface of some water in a tub, outlining the colour with black; then, with a feather, he massed and arranged the colours, taking some off and replacing it in infinitesimal quantities. Finally the result was a representation of Siva and Ourasi, robed in blue and violet, against a background of crude red. When they were quite finished he jerked the bowl, giving the figures a curtseying motion, and stood a little way off to contemplate the general effect;

and then, quite satisfied, stirred the whole thing up and began again, the same picture, with the same precise care.

We sailed past the holy city in a heavy, massive junk, the prow formed of a snake with its head erect and jaws yawning, down the Ganges, all rippled with rose and blue. Palaces, and more palaces, with thick walls and towers, that look like bastions, stand in perspective as far as the eye can see. Windows and balconies are cut in the ponderous masonry at the level of the third floor, and high above these rajahs' dwellings rise the domes of the temples, pointing skywards among tall trees that spread their shade on the russet stonework. At the foot of the palaces, steps lead down to the river, divided by little stages covered with wicker umbrellas that shine in the sun like discs of gold; under these, Brahmins, after bathing, were telling their beads. Now and again they dipped their fingers in the sacred waters and moistened their eyes, forehead, and lips.

One of the largest buildings once slid into the river during an earthquake, and stands there complete and unbroken, its magnificence surviving under water. Some minarets only rise above the surface like kiosks, and form a landing-stage, invaded by

the bathers, who wash themselves with much gesticulation, flourishing their long sarongs and white loin-cloths, which they spread out to dry on the steps.

Between the large parasols are thousands of little pagodas, formed of four columns and a roof, and sheltering idols wreathed with flowers, to whom the faithful pray and bring offerings. Garlands are for ever floating down-stream, jasmine and Indian pinks, and patches of scattered rose petals; and on the banks of the river, where the sand forms little bays, flowers lie in a hem of delicate colours.

Down the middle of the Ganges a white bundle is being borne, and on it a crow pecking the body of a child wrapped in its winding-sheet.

From the broad steps on the shore other narrower flights lead to archways and porticoes, or zigzag up to the lanes that make a gap of distant blackness in the light-hued mass of palaces and embankments.

Then from afar came the sound of tom-toms and bagpipes, nearer and nearer, and the musicians became visible at the top of one of the stair-like alleys. First came the men, then the women. One of these, robed in pale green with a violet and silver saree, carried a child in her arms wrapped in a red dress embroidered with gold. He was this day six

months old; he had eaten rice, and was brought to see the sacred Ganges for the first time. The family, friends, and neighbours had assembled in honour of the great ceremony, which consisted in holding the infant face downwards over the water, which he scarcely saw with half-shut eyes; and then the procession went back again to the sound of the music, and was gone.

Close to a temple, of which the cornice is decorated with female figures holding musical instruments, on a sort of terrace a party of youths were making a distracting din with brass instruments, acutely shrill, and, of course, tom-toms. Two very small temples covered with brass that shines like gold stand in the bazaar to mark the beginning and end of the coppersmiths' quarter, where every stall rings with the tinkle of the little hammers tapping the metal that is beaten into trays and pots and a thousand vessels for the worship of the gods and for domestic purposes. Workmen aged four, the great-grandsons of the master-smith, were already trying their 'prentice hand, chiselling the hard metal with a free touch, and ornamenting cups and bowls of traditional shape. And this is the only part of the calm and lazy city, living on its temples and its sacred river,

where the visitor feels himself a "tourist." Here the shops for the special craft of Benares are furnished with the unwonted luxury of chairs, and some display of signs and wares is made. Further on is a large open place full of piles of flowers, garlands of jasmine and marigold, and heaps of rose petals to be strewn on the water.

Next came a whole row of very small shops, where there was an endless variety of trifles for sale, toys made of wood painted red and green; and finally, on the ground floor of houses ornamented with carvings and slender colonnades, in a cool and shady and silent street, were the sellers of silk and cloth.

Past the buildings, and palaces with gardens enclosed behind pierced stonework, and then across fresh green fields full of flowers, under the shade of banyans and palm trees, we reached the temple of the monkeys. This temple, dedicated to the fierce and bloodthirsty goddess Durga, is painted all over of a vivid red colour, blazing in the sunshine with intolerable brightness. Inside the sanctuary a black image of the goddess may be seen, mounted on her lion, and flowers are arranged about her in radiating lines mingled with gold thread, and producing very much the effect of a theatrical sun. In the fore-

court, on the carvings and the roof of the temple monkeys swarm, rushing after each other, fighting for the grains of maize that are thrown to them, and tormenting the wretched mangy dogs that seek refuge in the temple precincts, where they, too, are kept alive by the faithful.

A poor sick ape, beaten by all the others, sat crying with hunger at the top of a parapet. I called her for a long time, showing her some maize on a tray. At last she made up her mind to come down. With the utmost caution she reached me, and then, after two or three feints, she struck the platter with her closed fist, sending all the grain flying. Utterly scared, she fled, followed to her perch by a whole party of miscreants roused by the gong-like blow on the tray. Others stole into the temple to snatch the flowers while the attendant priest had his back turned; and when I left they were all busily engaged in rolling an earthenware bowl about, ending its career in a smash. In front of the temple the crimson dust round a stake shows the spot where every day the blood is shed of a goat sacrificed to the Divinity.

A garden of roses and lilies was the dwelling-place of a very ancient fakir, who had taken a vow

to live naked, and only put on a loin-cloth when ladies were expected. He was venerated by all, yes, even by Abibulla, who knelt before him, touched the holy man's feet and then his own forehead. The old fellow was surrounded by pilgrims wearing wreaths of flowers round their neck; he came to meet me, took me by the hand, and led me under the shade of a kiosk, where he showed me a large book he had written, containing an account of the joys and ecstasies of his life of asceticism and prayer. This old man had a magnificent brow, and the deep gaze of his kind, smiling eyes was fine in a face puckered with a thousand wrinkles. Infinite calm and peace characterized this happy soul—a naked man in the midst of flowers.

At the end of the garden, in a little temple, is a statue of the holy man of the size of life, in his favourite attitude, sitting on his crossed legs. Round the image were the most absurd toys—and a photograph of the German Emperor! As I was leaving, the fakir called me back, asked me to think of him sometimes, and gave me one of the splendid yellow roses that hung about him like a glory.

Very early in the morning, on emerging from

the gloom of the narrow streets, there is a sudden blaze of glory, the rising sun, purple and gold, reflected in the Ganges, the waters throbbing like fiery opal. The people hurry to the shore carrying trays piled high with flowers and offerings. The women carry little jars in their hands looking like burnished gold, and containing a few drops of scented oil to anoint themselves withal after bathing. These jars are covered with roses and jasmine blossoms, to be sent floating down the sacred stream as an offering to the gods. The steps are crowded already with the faithful, who have waited till Surya the day-star should rise, before going through their devotional ablutions. With a great hubbub of shouts and cries, and laughter and squabbling, this throng pushes and hustles, while those unimaginable priests sit stolidly under their wicker sunshades, mumbling their prayers, and accepting alms and gifts. All along the river there are people bathing on the steps which go down under the water, the men naked all but a loin-cloth, the women wearing long veils which they change very cleverly for dry ones after their bath, and then wait in the sun till their garments are dry enough to carry away.

In the sacred tank, where Vishnu bathes when

he comes on earth, an old woman was standing pouring the stagnant green water over her body, while others of the faithful, seated on the steps, were piously drinking the stuff from a coco-nut that they handed round. In one corner of this pool was an exquisite bower of floating wreaths —yellow, white, and violet—a splash of bright colour on the squalid water.

Below one of the palaces is a huge statue of Vishnu Bhin in a reclining attitude, daubed with ochre, the face flesh-colour and white; a statue which is carried away every year by the floods and restored every year in its pristine grossness.

The palace of the Rajah of Nagpoor, with its two towers, overlooks the river from above a broad stairway. A balcony quite at the top is supported on a massive cornice lightly carved into acanthus leaves. The damp has subdued the red colour of the building, fading it especially at the base, and from a distance it might be fancied that a veil of thin gauze had been hung over the palace, and fastened beneath the carved parapet.

On the bank of the river, where there are no more steps, only beaten earth, in a little raised pit a pile of wood was slowly dying out. A man with

a cane raked back the sticks as they fell and rolled away. A squatting crowd were waiting till their relation was altogether consumed to cast his ashes on the sacred waters.

Then a girl's body was brought out, wrapped in white muslin; the bier, made of bamboo, was wreathed with marigolds, and on the light shroud there were patches of crimson powder, almost violet. The bearers, on reaching the river, placed the body in the water, leaving it there for a time.

A little way off an old man was wrapping the naked body of a poor woman in a white cloth; then he fastened it to two poles to dip it in the river; finally, with the help of another Sudra, he laid the corpse on a meagre funeral pile, and went off to fetch some live charcoal from the sacred fire which the Brahmins perpetually keep alive on a stone terrace overlooking the Ganges. He carried the scrap of burning wood at the end of a bunch of reeds, and, praying aloud, walked five times round the pyre, which completely concealed the body. Then he gently waved the bunch of reeds, making them blaze up, and placed them beneath the wood, which slowly caught fire, sending up dense curling clouds of white vapour and slender tongues of flame, creeping along the damp logs that

seemed to go out again immediately. But suddenly the fire flared up to the top of the pile; the flesh hissed in the flame, and filled the air with a sickening smell.

The maiden was placed on a very high pile of saplings and dry crackling boughs. Her father fetched the sacred fire, and then, with the same ceremonials and prayers, set light to the wood, which flashed up in a golden glow with a sweet odour. The flame rose clear against the sky for a long time before the smell of her burnt flesh mingled with that of the poor woman, whose limbs, under the action of the heat, seemed to stretch to an inordinate length. One arm, sticking out from the fire, seemed to clench its fist, which was bright yellow, as if it would clutch at something; and then all was consumed—the wood pile fell in, the skull cracking with a dull snap, and nothing was left but a heap of embers, into which the attendants raked the cinders that rolled down the sloping bank.

The old woman's bones and ashes were cast into the Ganges, her husband still vacantly looking on, as all that was left of his life's companion floated for a few moments, and then was swallowed up in an eddy.

On the remains of the pyre was placed a corpse of spectral emaciation, which had been lying at the top of the bank since the day before for its turn, as a pauper, to be cremated at the cost of the municipality. The head alone was wrapped in a wretched rag, and creeping flies formed a cuirass on the dark skin, already torn in places by the kites. Petroleum was poured over the hapless body, and it flared up with the wood in a livid pink and green blaze, sending up a cloud of acrid red smoke.

And so on, in an endless file, come the bodies of the faithful dead, some from long distances, so that their souls may rise at once to paradise from their ashes burnt on the Manumenka.

A dome of smoke hangs like a vault over the fires, motionless, veiling the sun. The relations of the dead, sitting on their heels, gaze at the flames with an expression almost of indifference; no one weeps, and they converse calmly in no subdued tones.

The pile of the girl with marigold wreaths and the shroud stained crimson and purple flung her ashes to the winds, reduced to mere atoms of bone and light cinder, and the servants of the place drowned a few still glowing sticks in the river;

the family and friends slowly went up the yellow stone steps and disappeared through a gateway leading into the town.

The attendants threw water on the pauper's pyre, and then with their long bamboos pushed the mass of burnt wood and flesh into the Ganges, where it looked like some enormous black frog with a white patch for the head.

They shoved it under water, but it presently rose to the surface and floated down the stream, followed by a flock of hawks that snatched at the burnt remains and fought over them in the air, while crocodiles below swam up and snapped at them, dragging them down in their enormous jaws, which appeared for a moment above the water.

By the side of the Manumenka stand two stelæ, on which two carved figures, represented as surrounded by flames, preserve the memory of the time when the funeral pyre consumed the living wife with the dead husband.

In the town, at a spot where several alleys meet, stood a mob of people holding out the ends of their sarees or dhotis to catch handfuls of grain which a kshatriya was throwing to them from a

window, though he looked almost as ragged as the beggars collected in front of the house.

Close to a shop where I was bargaining for some old bronzes, in an open booth, and quite alone among the metal jars and trays, sat a boy of four, his only garment a green silk jacket bordered with blue velvet, stitched with silver thread; there was nothing between the little vest and his bright bronze skin. He had a blue cap embroidered with gold, and his eyes were darkened with khol. He was drawing lines very neatly on a slate, and then wrote beneath them the pretty Hindoo letters that look like cabalistic signs, saying them as he went on, *pa, pa, pa, pi, pi, pi, paï, paï, paï, pom, pom, pom,* till at last, seeing that I was looking at him and smiling, quite fascinated by his pretty ways, he burst out laughing, a hearty, happy, baby laugh, and then gravely went on with his business again.

Then, under a portico in front of us, a man began to undress. He threw off his dhoti and his sarong, keeping on his loin-cloth only. With outstretched arms he placed a heavy copper pot full of water on the ground, took it up between

his teeth, and without using his hands tilted his head back till the water poured all over him in a shower, which splashed up from the pavement, sprinkling the spectators in the front row. Next he tied his dhoti round the jar, which he refilled, and fastened the end to his long hair. Then, simply by turning his head, he spun the heavy pot round him. It looked as if it must pull his head off, but he flung it faster and faster till he presently stopped.

There were people performing their devotional ablutions below stream from the place of burning, and one old man took a few drops of water in the hollow of his hand and drank it, quite close to a shapeless black mass at which a kite was pecking as it floated by.

At sunset, when the glow fired the stones to a semblance of transparent, burning light, at the top of one of the flights of steps rising from the river to the town, and in front of a gate with large brass nails, glittering like sparks, the figure appeared of a holy beggar in yellow rags, with a copper jar blazing with reflected light; he was set in a halo of gold, and looked like the vision of some pagan god. He stood motionless for a

long time, and then, as the last sunbeam went out, he vanished beyond the fire-studded gate, while all the scene faded into rosy lilac, rapidly dying into blue night.

A distant noise of tom-toms—big drums thumping out minims in the bass, small ones rattling out semiquavers in very short, sharp notes; and to this accompaniment came the sharp trill of a metal flute. The music came nearer at a brisk pace, heralded by two tall baggage camels, a rare sight in Benares, where the streets are so narrow and straight, and only foot passengers are to be seen. Then followed saddle-horses, led by hand, and a large number of men on foot, and after an interval there appeared a band, atrociously out of tune, immediately in front of a palankin hung with a shawl embroidered all over in palms of different shades of gold and beads. In this sat a little bridegroom of eight, dressed in pale yellow satin, a wreath of marigolds round his neck, and above his turban a cap made of jasmine, the ends hanging all round his head—a little bridegroom, eight years old, very solemn, sitting cross-legged with a huge bouquet in his hand, and facing him his two little brothers in white silk and necklaces of jasmine.

In the evening the priest would say prayers over the couple—the bride being probably about five—and the bridegroom would stay with the little bride's parents. Next day she would spend with the boy's parents, and after that they would both go back to their lessons and probably never meet again, unless they were very near neighbours, till he, having attained the age of fifteen, they would be really married.

The Maharajah of Benares sent his carriage this morning to take me to him. We went to the Ganges, where a palankin was in waiting to carry me across the narrow strip of sand between the road and the boat, escorted by a worthy who held a tall red umbrella, fringed with gold, over my head.

The barge was screened by a crimson awning and rowed by four men in red. The water, a broad sheet of silky sheen, seemed motionless, and in the distance, under a soft, powdery haze, Benares showed like a mass of dim gold, the two slender minarets of Aurungzeeb's mosque towering above the town.

We landed at Ramnagar, a marble palace looking like a fortified town, its massive walls rising

from the river and crowned by balconies and fairy kiosks — a lacework of stone against the brilliant sky.

A crowd of servants in red came down the flight of steps to the landing-place, and stood on each side, while at the top the Maharajah stood to receive me, in a tunic of yellow brocaded with silver, and silk trousers of various shades of violet and gold tissue; his turban was quite small, with an aigrette and a spray of diamonds.

From the open loggia at the end of the vast reception-room, lined with white marble and hung with thick carpets, there was an extensive view over the green plain inundated with water and sunshine to the holy city of dazzling domes that looked as if they had just risen from the Ganges. The air was full of heady fragrance; the Rajah described the springtide festivals, barges carrying troupes of dancing bayadères on the Ganges sparkling with a myriad lights.

Instead of the usual wreath of flowers for my neck the Rajah gave me a necklace of silver threads, to which hung a little bag of purple and green silk, closely embroidered, and looking like a scent-sachet, or a bag to hold some precious amulet.

We drove across a succession of parks to visit

Sumer Mundir, a too elaborately carved temple, the panels representing scenes from the Ramayana set in ornamental borders. On the roof, which bristled with sculptured stone, thousands of blue pigeons were perched asleep, their iridescent plumage scarcely stirring in the sunshine. Beyond a tank at the end of the park was a palace in the Arab style with incredibly delicate ornaments of wrought marble, open halls painted in subdued colouring, and lighted by the golden reflections from the water. The pool had steps all round it, in which crowds seat themselves on the occasions of pilgrimage, and far away, the enchanting vision of Benares, the holy city, in every shade of amber and honey.

Then into a garden with a number of quite narrow, straight paths bordered with nasturtiums, tall daisies, and geraniums, while a tangle of jasmine, china roses, bougainvillea, and poinsettia flourished freely under the shade of tamarind and palm trees. Over a clump of orange trees in blossom a cloud of butterflies was flitting, white patterned with black above, and *cloisonnés* beneath in red and yellow with fine black outlines.

As we returned past a village—a hamlet of houses gathering round a well surmounted by a kiosk shading a gaudy idol crowned with red

pinks—a perfectly naked fakir, his straight black hair bound twice round his head like a turban, stood basking in the sun, leaning against a wall, and chanting in a rapid monotone, while two babies, under the shade of a fan-palm leaf, stared up at him and sucked their thumbs.

Then the sunset, in the furnace of heavy purple and red, reflected in the water in fiery copper-colour streaked with violet, till soon it all faded together, to gold, to lemon-colour; the mist rising from the river spread over all the country, and everything looked the same in the cloudless gloom. One quarter of the sky glowed faintly, through the haze a crimson globe rose into view, the moon appeared, and soon lighted up all the sky with a soft greenish glow, pallid but deep, lying on the tranquil Ganges in broad rippling sheets of gold and green, spangled with light where a fish leaped, or a white bird dipped its wing as it skimmed swiftly across without a sound. The gold grew cold and dead, the moon turned to steel against the intensely blue sky, to cold blue steel on the lustrous face of the waters.

We went into the observatory, where the servants were sleeping in the open air on camp beds, lying across each other and blocking the entrance.

I went to gaze at the north star, looking very small, a tiny spangle of blue in the blue velvet sky, visible at the top of a crazy flight of steps that goes up to nowhere in the air from the topmost terrace.

Down in the streets the houses looked ghostly blue in the moonlight, the cross roads, lighted with the warmer glow of a few lamps in red paper shades, alternating with the black darkness, in which it was just possible to discern cows and goats lying on the ground.

Near a temple some bells and tom-toms animated the silence with their clang and clatter. Worshippers stole in noiselessly, barefoot on the stones, and entered the sanctuary, within which tapers were burning.

Further away, in another quite small temple, a young Brahmin robed in white, and very handsome, was reading the Ramayana to two women; the three quite filled the little building. The entrance was screened by a curtain composed of jasmine flowers threaded on fine string, and behind this veil of flowers the three figures looked like the creatures of a legend. Outside the sanctuary, seated on the steps and flagstones and obstructing the street, were a score or so of women redolent of lemon and

sandal-wood, and listening to the scripture distinctly chanted out by the young priest.

In the street were bayadères, and women at every window, the pretty faces brightly illuminated, the plainer in a skilfully subdued light. The sound of tom-toms and pipes could be heard, and the guttural, quavering song of a dancing beauty performing for some amateur; quite young boys were wandering about the street, almost children, all in white. Where the roads met, a mosque was illuminated in honour of this month of Ramadan, and the believers were trooping out in a crowd.

A woman on the river-bank was flinging into the water, with devout unction, scraps of paper on which the name of Rama was written, rolled up in a paste made of flour. Not far from her another woman was praying; she stopped to wash her copper cooking-pots, then prayed again; gave her baby a bath, and then, squatting on the lowest step, prayed once more, and for a long time, after which she picked up her pots and her little one and went her way.

On the shore, on the steps in front of the temples and round the holy images, in short, everywhere on this day, red powder was sprinkled to inaugurate

the month just beginning; a beggar, to secure the favour of the gods, had smeared his head and hands with it.

And once more in a barge on the Ganges. The atmosphere seemed faintly iridescent, like mother-of-pearl, the silence serenely lulled by the distant sound of a flute. The palaces and temples, reflected in the still water, looked in the distance like forts crowned with turrets of gold, and their little windows like loopholes. The broad stairs of the quays, where the priests' umbrellas glitter, assumed a spacious, unfamiliar dignity, the red colour shading paler towards the bottom, where it was washed off by the lapping Ganges, looking as though a fairy hanging of gauze were spread under the wavelets in honour of the Apsaras and the divinities of the river.

A kshatriya, a very old man, had seen me yesterday returning from Ramnagar with my necklet of silver threads. Convinced by this that I must be "a Europe Rajah," he tormented me to grant him a title. He wanted to be Raj Bahadur; this was the height of his ambition. After following me about the bazaar all the morning, he sat for a long time in my room. So, to get rid of him, seeing

that he persisted in hoping that I should call him Raj Bahadur, I did so; this, however, did not satisfy him: I must write it down on paper. At last I consented. Quite delighted now, he went off to shout the words to his friends, who had been waiting for him in the garden, and then, very solemn, and conscious of his new dignity, he disappeared down the road.

At the station pilgrims again, bewildered, shouting, rushing about in search of their lost luggage. One group presently emerged from the crowd, led by a man bareheaded, who rang a big bell with great gesticulations, his arms in the air, and the whole party marched off towards the temples in silent and orderly procession.

Then, from a bridge across the Ganges, for a moment we had a last glimpse of the sacred city—the gold-coloured umbrellas, the throng of bathers on the steps to the river — and then Abibulla gravely remarked, "If only India had three cities like Benares it would be impossible ever to leave it."

ALLAHABAD

In a wonderful garden, amazing after the sandy waste that lies between Benares and Allahabad—a garden of beds filled with flowers showing no leaves, but closely planted so as to form a carpet of delicate, blending hues — stand three mausoleums, as large as cathedrals, in the heart of cool silence, the tombs of the Sultan Purvez, of his father Khusru, and of his wife, the Begum Chasira.

High in the air, in the first mausoleum, at the head and foot of the white marble cenotaph, covered with letters that look like creepers, are tablets bearing inscriptions which record the life of the hero; and above the sarcophagus rises an almost impossibly light and airy structure — a canopy of white marble supported on columns as slender as flower-stems.

In the Begum's tomb the sarcophagus is on the ground, surrounded by a pale-tinted mosaic pavement. The windows, screened by pierced stone, admit a rosy light, and the walls are painted to imitate Persian tiles, with tall cyprus trees in blue and green. Incense was burning in one corner, the

perfume mingling with that of the flowers, wafted in at every opening. Doors of massive cedar, carved with the patience of a bygone time, rattle on their hinges as the wind slams them to, but still endure, uninjured by ages.

There was nobody in the garden of the mausoleums, not even the usual obsequious and mendicant attendant. Only by the tomb of Purvez a moollah was kneeling in prayer, motionless, and wrapped in some very light white material, which the wind gently stirred and blew up. All the time I was examining the mausoleums he prayed on, prostrate, immovable; and even from afar, from the road, I could see him still, like a stone among the marble work, at the feet of the hero who sleeps his last in mid-air.

The fort of Allahabad, the fort of the mutiny of 1857, is a complete citadel where, in the thickness of the walls, behind screens of acacia trees, lurk doors into palaces. Among the gardens there are clearings full of guns and ambulance waggons, and enormous barracks and huts for native soldiers. Then on the ponderous stonework of the ramparts rise little kiosks in the light Hindoo-Mussulman style, elaborate and slender, built by Akbar the con-

queror, who took Prayag and razed it, to build on the site a city dedicated to Allah. And now modern architecture is slowly invading it, adding to the flat walls which hide under their monotony the gems of stonework with their elegant decoration.

From the parapet of one of the bastions the Ganges may be seen in the distance, of a sickly turquoise-blue, shrouded in the haze of dust which hangs over everything and cuts off the horizon almost close in front of us, and the tributary Jumna, translucent and green. At the confluence of the rivers stands a native village of straw and bamboo huts, swept away every season by the rains. This is Triveni, containing 50,000 souls, which enjoys a great reputation for sanctity, and attracts almost as many pilgrims from every part of India as does Benares. The people come to wash away their sins in the Saravasti, the mystical river that comes down from heaven and mingles its waters at this spot with those of the sacred Ganges and the Jumna. The faithful who bathe at Triveni observe an additional ceremony and cut their hair; each hair, as it floats down stream in the sacred waters, effaces a sin, and obtains its forgiveness. In front of the barracks, a relic of past magnificence, there stands alone on a porphyry pedestal, in the middle of a broad plot

trampled by soldiers on parade, an Asoka column carved with inscriptions to the top, and decorated half-way up with a sort of capital.

Fakirs, holding out their begging-bowls as they squatted round an opening in the ground, showed that it was the entrance to a temple; a few steps down, a long corridor with little niches on each side, and then hall after hall full of grimacing gods, lighted up by our guide's torch, till at last we reached an immense vault where impenetrable darkness filled the angles lost in a labyrinth of arcades converging to some mystery. Here all the Hindoo gods, carved in stone, have been crowded together, with their horrible contortions, their stolid beatitude, their affected grace; and in their midst is a huge idol, hacked with a great cut by Aurungzeeb, the Moslem emperor, at the time of his conquest. Suddenly all about us was a crowd of Brahmins, appearing from what dark corners we could not discover. They looked nasty and half asleep, and vanished at once with a murmur of whispered speech that hung about the galleries in an echo.

At the entrance into one of the chapels is the trunk of an *Akshai bâr* or *bô tree*, a kind of fig such as the Buddhists place in front of their sanctuaries. The tree is living in the subterranean

vault, and after thrusting its head through the heavy layer of stones forming the roof of the temple, it spreads its branches under the light of day. Endless absurd legends have grown up about the mystery of this tree, which is said to be no less than twenty centuries old; and my guide, who talks aloud in the presence of the idols he despises, being a Mohammedan, bows reverently to the tree and murmurs, "That is sacred; God has touched it."

LUCKNOW

A vision of Europe. Cottages surrounded by lawns under the shade of tall trees, and against the green the scarlet coats of English soldiers walking about. And close about the houses, as if dropped there by chance, tombs covered with flagstones and enclosed by railings, and on all the same date, June or July, 1857. Further away, under the trees, are heaps of stones and bricks, the ruins of mosques and forts, hardly visible now amid the roots and briars that look like the flowery thickets of a park, varied by knolls to break the monotony of the level sward. In the native town that has grown up on the site of the palace of Nana Sahib, built indeed of the

ruins of its departed splendour, dwell a swarm of pariahs, who dry their rags and hang out clothes and reed screens over every opening, living there without either doors or windows, in utter indifference to the passer-by.

Opposite a large tank, where a tall column rises from the water in memory of the victims of the Mutiny, and where a party of the votaries of Siva are performing their pious ablutions, a building stands in the Hindoo-Jesuit style of architecture. It is heavy, with white carvings above its pink paint, and with columns supporting turrets crowned with large lion-faces, the masks only, in the Indian manner, daylight showing through the jaws and eyes, and the profiles absurd, shapeless, and unmeaning. This is the college of La Martinière.

In the chapel of the building through which I passed to go down to the tomb of La Martinière, two students, seated American fashion, with their feet on the back of the bench in front of them, were reading the *Times of India* and smoking cigarettes.

In the circular marble crypt there is a large cracked bell, inscribed "Lieutenant-Colonel Martin, 1788," also a bust of the corporal, and, in an adjoining cell, the tomb of Colonel Martin, who,

having left his native town of Lyons for Pondicherry, after having painfully worked his way up to the grade of corporal in the French king's army, departed from thence and travelled to Oudh. There as a favourite of the Moslem king's and generalissimo of his troops, he amassed a large fortune, and spent it in building the palaces and colleges which perpetuate his name in several towns in India. He was an eccentric adventurer, whom some now remember here, and whose name pronounced in the Indian fashion, with a broad accent on the *a*, suggests an almost ironical meaning in conjunction with the idea of a college.

By the side of the road, in the town, the walls are still standing, all that remains of a great hall in the palace of Secundra Bagh, in which, after the suppression of the Mutiny in 1857, two thousand sepoys who refused to surrender were put to death.

And at this day the high road passes Secundra Bagh in ruins, and on the ground where Nana Sahib's soldiers fell, huge flowers are strewn of "flame of the forest" fading into hues of blood.

In the middle of a garden, full of clumps of flowering shrubs standing on green lawns, is the Nadjiff Ackraff, a vast rotunda crowned with gilt

cupolas and spires, and all round the building is an arcade built in a square and studded with iron pins on which thousands of wax lights are stuck on the evenings of high festivals.

Inside the mausoleum numberless lustres hang from the roof, and fine large standing lamps with crystal pendants burn round two tombs covered with antique hangings and wreathed with jasmine; beneath these lie the two last kings of Oudh. Small models of two famous mosques, one in gold and one in silver, are placed on the tombs, round which a whole regiment of obsequious moollahs and beggars mount guard. On the walls childish paintings, representing scenes of the Anglo-Indian conflict, alternate with mirrors in gilt frames, and silk standards exquisitely faded, embroidered with dim gold and silver, and surmounted by tridents.

Here, once more, is the spectre of the mutiny that broke out in the Residency, of which the ruins may be seen in the middle of a park intersected by watercourses, the English flag still proudly waving over them.

The gateway looks as if it had been carved by the dints of bullets in the stone, and close by, a breach in the huge enclosing wall scored all over by shot gave ingress to the murderous host. Inside,

on the walls that are left standing, and they are many, the bullets seem to have scrawled strange characters. In the bath-house with its graceful columns and arabesque ornaments, in Dr. Fayrer's house, of which the proportions remind us of Trianon, where Sir Henry Lawrence died among the ruins of the mosque—everywhere, we see tablets of black marble commemorating the numerous victims of the rebellion. In one barrack two hundred and forty-five women and children were murdered; in another forty-five officers were buried in the ruins. And close by the scene of carnage, in a smiling cemetery, their graves hidden in flowers, under the shadow of the English flag that flies from the summit of the ruined tower which formerly commanded the country round, sleep the nine hundred and twenty-seven victims of Nana Sahib's treachery.

CAWNPORE

Here, even more than at Lucknow, are the memories of 1857—columns and tombs; and on the spot where the last victims who had trusted him were murdered by the orders of the Indian prince, stands the "Memorial," an arcade sur-

rounding the figure of an angel, which in its Christmas-card sentimentality suggests the apotheosis of a fairy drama, and has the arid lack of feeling that characterizes a monochrome figure in vulgar decoration, almost counteracting the pity we experience in the presence of the simpler tombs -all bearing the same date, June, 1857.

By the roadside came two figures tottering along, and then, turning to look at me, showed me the horror of their shrivelled bodies, their dimmed eyes —all that seemed alive in those drawn faces of skin and bone—the jaw stiffened in a skull-like grimace; victims of the famine, who had come from the Central Provinces where there had been no rain for two years, and where everything was dying. This couple were making their way to a poorhouse hard by. They had come from a village in Bundelkund, whence all the inhabitants had fled —themselves the sole survivors of a family of eighteen souls. First the children died, then the very old folks. These two had kept themselves alive on what had been given them on the way, but immigrants soon were too many in the districts unvisited by famine, and ere long they could get nothing; then they fed on roots, on what they

could steal from fields or garden-plots, or found left to rot, scorned even by the beasts.

They were clad in colourless rags, matted and grizzled hair hung about their pain-stricken faces. The woman was the more delicate, her bones smaller and less knotted than those of the man, whose joints were gnarled, his scraggy knees forming thick bosses of bone above his shins. They threw themselves like hungry animals on some cooked grain which Abibulla brought out for them, and then, with scared looks all round, they went quickly away, as quickly as they could with halting, weary feet, without even saying thank-you.

The poorhouse is about two miles from the city; it consists of a courtyard enclosed by walls, from which awnings are stretched supported on poles. And here from twelve to fifteen hundred wretched skeletons had found shelter, spectres with shoulder-blades almost cutting through the skin, arms shrunk to the bone, with the elbow-joint like a knot in the middle, and at the end hands which looked enormous and flat and limp, as if every knuckle were dislocated. Their gnarled knees projected from the fearful leanness of their legs, and the tightened skin between the starting ribs showed the hollow pit of the stomach. Men and women

alike were for the most part naked, but for a ragged cotton loin-cloth. And all had the same scared look in their eyes, the same grin of bare teeth between those hollow cheeks. Almost all had bleeding wounds where the bones had come through the skin.

Such as were able to work at making rope or straw mats earned an anna a day, the children half an anna. This was extra to their food, a cake of gram flour, which was all the allowance for twenty-four hours. But among those admitted to the poorhouse about a quarter of the number were unable to work. In a similar but smaller enclosure adjacent was the infirmary, a hospital with no physician, no remedies. The shrunken creatures lay shivering in the sun, huddled under rags of blanket. All were moaning, many were unconscious, wandering in delirium, shrieking, and writhing. One man, too weak to stand, came up grovelling on his hands and knees, taking me for a doctor, and beseeching me to go to his wife who was lying over there, and by her a dusky moist rag as it seemed—her very inside purged out by dysentery.

Near her was another woman, gone mad, dancing, her skeleton limbs contorted in a caricature of

grace; and a child of some few months, like an undeveloped abortion, of the colour of a new penny, with a large head rolling on a neck reduced to the thickness of the vertebræ, and arms and legs no larger than knitting-pins, but, in a sort of mockery, the swollen belly of the fever-stricken. The eyes blinked in the little wrinkled face, seeking something in vacancy; it tried to cry, but the only sound was a feeble croak.

One boy, who being very tall looked even more emaciated than the rest, dragged an enormous leg swollen with elephantiasis, which had not diminished with the reduction of the rest of his body.

"And is there no doctor?"

"He comes now and then," said the baboo, who was our guide; but on my pressing the question this "now and then" remained vague, no day or week could be named.

"And no medicine?"

"We give rice to the sick, who all have dysentery, instead of the daily cake."

"And is that all?"

"But rice is very good, and it is very dear, and some of them have been ill for three weeks."

"And how many die every day?"

"Five—six," said the baboo, hesitating; then,

seeing that I was quite incredulous, "Sometimes more," he added.

Further away was one of the famine-camps—established all over India—to afford the means of earning a living to those whom the scourge had driven from their native provinces.

Two or three thousand haggard and fleshless beings were digging or carrying earth to form an embankment for a railway or a road. With arms scarcely thicker than the handles of the tools they wielded, the labourers gasped in the air, tired in a minute, and pausing to rest in spite of the abuse of the overseers. Emaciated women, so small in their tattered sarees, carried little baskets on their heads containing a few handfuls of earth, but which they could scarcely lift. One of them, wrinkled and shrunken, looked a hundred years old tottering under her load; on reaching the spot where she was to empty out the soil, she leaned forward a little and let the whole thing fall, indifferent to the dust which covered her and filled her mouth and eyes; and after taking breath for a moment, off she went again as if walking in her sleep.

The men are paid as much as two annas (one penny) a day. The women earn ten, seven, or three

cowries (shells at the rate of about 190 to the anna) for each basket-load, according to the distance, and could make as much as an anna a day. But each of these toilers had to support many belongings who could not work, and squatted about the camp in their desolate and pitiable misery. And the food was insufficient for any of them, only hindering the poor creatures from dying at once.

The baboo who has lost caste and been half-civilized in the Anglo-Indian colleges, is always the middleman between the Government and the poor; and he, barefaced and with no pretence of concealment, took twenty per cent. of the wages he was supposed to pay the labourers. And there were none but baboos to superintend the poor-houses and the famine-camps. It is said that during the previous famine some made fortunes of six to eight lacs of rupees (the lac is £10,000).

These gentlemen of the Civil Service would put in an appearance "now and then"—the eternal "now and then" that answers every question in India. They stepped out of a buggy, walked quickly round, had seen, and were gone again in a great hurry to finish some important work for the next European mail.

And of all the victims of the disaster those I had just seen were not the most to be pitied. It was on families of high caste, men who might not work and whose wives must be kept in seclusion, that the famine weighed most cruelly. At first they borrowed money (and the rate of interest recognized and tolerated here is seventy-five per cent.), then they sold all they could sell. Bereft of every resource, unable to earn anything in any way, regarding the famine as an inevitable infliction by the incensed gods, they let themselves starve to death in sullen pride, shut up in their houses with their womankind. Thus they were the most difficult to rescue. Their unassailable dignity made them refuse what they would have regarded as charity, even to save the life of those dearest to them, and it needed the angelic craft of the women of the Zenana Mission to induce the kshatriyas to accept the smallest sum to keep themselves alive.

Grain was now at five times the usual price, and would continue to rise till the next harvest-time. Official salaries and the wages of the poor remained fixed, and misery was spreading, gaining ground on all sides of the devastated districts.

A few officers, a few clergy only, had organized some distribution of relief; the administration,

wholly indifferent, was drawing double pay in consideration of the increase of work in famine time.

The road from Cawnpore to Gwalior makes a bend towards central India across a stony, barren tract, where a sort of leprosy of pale lichen has overgrown the white dust on the fields that are no longer tilled. There is no verdure; mere skeletons of trees, and a few scattered palms still spread their leaves, protecting under their shade clumps of golden gynerium.

As we approached Jhansi we passed a village whence all the inhabitants had fled. The houses, the little temples, the gods on their pedestals by the dried-up tanks—everything was thickly coated with white dust.

Through the half-open doors in the courtyards bones were bleaching, almost buried under the fine powder that lies on everything. And from this dust, as we trod it, rose a sharp smell of pepper and smoke. Twisted branches drooped forlorn from the skeletons of a few trees that were left standing. Parasitic creepers had woven a flowing robe of tangle over a statue of Kali, left unbroken in front of a small temple in ruins; and all over the withered

and faded growth the fine white dust had settled in irregular patterns, a graceful embroidery rather thicker in the folds.

There was not a living thing in the silence and overheated air—not a bird, not a fly; and beyond the houses lay the plain once more, a monotonous stretch of dead whiteness, the unspeakable desolation of murderous nature, henceforth for ever barren.

At Jhansi, by the station, were parties of famishing emigrants, all with the same dreadful white grimace and glazed eyes, and in the town more starving creatures dragging their suffering frames past the shops—almost all closed—or begging at the doors of the temples and mosques; and the few passers-by hurried on as if they, too, wanted to escape, overpowered by this scene of dread and horror.

The train, now travelling northwards again, ran for a long way across the scorched plain through groves of dead trees and sandhills covered with lichen, till, in the golden sunset close to Gwalior, suddenly, at the foot of a hill, we came upon the greenery of fine parks with palaces rising above cool marble tanks.

GWALIOR

A giant rock and natural fortress command the plain, towering above the garden-land. Two roads, hewn in the stone, lead by easy ascents to the top. All along the rock wall bas-reliefs are carved, warriors riding on elephants, and Kalis in graceful attitudes. There are openings to the green depths of reservoirs, small temples, arcades sheltering idols bowered in fresh flowers. Arches in the Jaïn style of architecture span the road, and at the summit, beyond the inevitable drawbridge, stands Mandir, the palace of King Pal, a dazzling structure of yellow stone, looking as if it had grown on the hill-rock that it crowns with beauty. Towers carrying domed lanterns spring skywards above the massive walls. The decoration is playfully light, carvings alternating with inlaid tiles; and all round the lordly and solemn edifice wheels a procession of blue ducks on a yellow ground in earthenware.

Under the archway by which we entered a cow crossed our path, her head decked with a tiara of peacock's feathers, and went her way alone for a

walk at an easy pace. Within the palace is a maze of corridors, and pierced carving round every room fretting the daylight. An inner court is decorated with earthenware panels set in scroll-work of stone. A slender colonnade in white marble is relieved against the yellow walls, and below the roof, in the subdued light of the deeper angles, the stone, the marble, the porcelain, take hues of sapphire, topaz, and enamel, reflections as of gold and mother-of-pearl. In a pavilion is a little divan within three walls, all pierced and carved; it suggests a hollow pearl with its sides covered with embroidery that dimly shows against the sheeny smoothness of the marble. The effect is so exquisitely soft, so indescribably harmonious, that the idea of size is lost, and the very materials seem transfigured into unknown substances. One has a sense as of being in some fairy palace, enclosed in a gem excavated by gnomes—a crystal of silk and frost, as it were, bright with its own light.

The rock is girt with a belt of walls, and in the citadel, besides Mandir, with its outbuildings and tanks, there is a whole town of palaces and temples, which are being demolished little by little to make way for barracks.

In front of these stolid-looking sepoys, their black heads and hands conspicuous in their yellow uniforms, are drilled to beat of drum, marking every step and movement.

Adinath, a Jaïn temple, is roofed with huge blocks of stone. The airy architecture is a medley of balconies, of pierced panels, of arcades in squares, in lozenges, in octagons; the two stories, one above the other, are on totally different plans, and along every wall, on every column and every balustrade runs a fatiguing superfluity of ornament, figures and arabesques repeated on the stone, of which not an inch is left plain.

The roof, upheld by a double row of stone blocks set on end, and somewhat atilt, weighs on the building, which is already giving way; and the next monsoon will destroy this marvel of the Jaïn to spare the trouble of military constructors — the builders of barracks.

Another temple, Sas Bahu, likewise elaborately carved under a roof too heavy for it, has a terrace overhanging the hill, whence there is a view over Lashkar, the new palace, gleaming white among the huge trees of the park.

At our feet lay old Gwalior, sacked again and again, and as often rebuilt out of its own ruins;

and now the princely residences, all of marble wrought in almost transparent lacework, serve to shelter wandering cattle.

One mosque alone, a marvel of workmanship, its stones pierced with a thousand patterns, remains intact amid the Indian dwellings built, all round the sacred spot, of the remains of ancient magnificence, of which, ere long, nothing will be left standing.

A fortified wall encloses Lashkar, the residence of the Maharajah of Gwalior; the bridges, which form part of the enclosure crossing the river that flows through the estate, have thick bars filling up the arches.

On entering the park the cocked turbans of the bodyguard again reminded us of the hats of the French Guards.

Heavy coaches with solid wheels, hermetically covered with red stuff patterned with white, were bringing home the invisible but noisy ladies of the zenana.

The garden, which is very extensive and laid out in beds carefully crammed with common flowers, has Jablochkoff lamps at every turning. It is traversed by a little narrow-gauge railway, and

the toy train is kept under a vault of the brand-new, spotless white palace.

The Maharajah was out, at his devotions; I could see everything. Up a staircase with a gilt paper and gilt banisters, leading to rooms where crystal lustres hang like tears above Oxford Street furniture, and lovely chromo-lithographs in massive and glittering frames.

In the forecourt a cast-metal nymph presides over a sham-bronze fountain.

The south-western side of the great rock of Gwalior is hewn into temples sheltering gigantic statues of Tirthankar; there are the usual bas-reliefs all over the walls, idols squatting under canopies and pagodas, slender columns supporting arches, standing out in contrast with the ochre-coloured stone. Other temples, vast halls as at Ellora—a vale of pagodas, "the happy valley"—have all disappeared under the picks of engineers, to make a dusty road to the new town of bungalows all adobe and straw thatch.

As the sun sank the citadel absorbed the gold and purple glory, and looked as though it were of some translucent half-fused metal; the towers and temples with their decoration of tiles blazed

against the pure sky. High over Mandir a little balcony with spindle columns, overhanging the precipice at a giddy height, caught the last rays of Surya, and flashed with a gem-like gleam above Gwalior, which was already shrouded in the blue haze of night.

AGRA

In a suburb of little houses beyond a great open square stands a gateway—a monumental portico of pink sandstone inlaid with white marble, on which the texts from the Koran, in black marble, look green in the intense light.

On entering this portal, lo, a miraculous vision! At the end of an avenue of dark cypress trees stands the tomb of Mumtaj-Mahal, a dream in marble, its whiteness, crowned by five cupolas that might be pearls, mirrored in a pool edged with pink stone and borders of flowers.

The whole mausoleum, the terrace on which it stands, the four minarets as tall as light-towers, are all in dead white marble, the whiteness of milk and opal, glistening with nacreous tints in the brilliant sunshine under a sky pale with heat and dust.

Inside, the walls are panelled with mosaic of carnelian and chalcedony, representing poppies and funkias, so fragile-looking, so delicate, that they seem real flowers blooming in front of the marble. And marble screens, carved into lace-work, filling the high doorways and the windows, admit a tender amber-toned light.

Under the central dome sleeps Mumtaj-Mahal, the well-beloved sultana, for whom Shah Jehan erected the most beautiful mausoleum in the world.

A marble balustrade, of flowing design and astounding delicacy, exquisitely harmonious and artistic, encloses the white sarcophagus, which is inlaid with *mindi* and basilic flowers in costly agate, linked by inscriptions looking like lacings of narrow black braid. This balustrade alone, in the Taj, under the marble pile which forms the tomb of the empress, and on which 20,000 craftsmen laboured for twenty years, would, in its indescribable beauty of workmanship, have amply fulfilled Shah Jehan's vow.

On the outside, all round the lower part of the monument, carved borders frame flowers of pale mosaic in the walls; the ornament is in such faint relief that at a short distance it is invisible, and the Taj is seen only in the perfect elegance of its

proportions. The mausoleum is built on a broad terrace of white marble at a height of 270 feet, overhanging the Jumna; and the impressive, harmonious outline commands the plain from afar.

Legends have gathered round the Taj Mahal as about every old building in India, and this one seems to me not impossible in its barbarity.

When the last stone was placed, Shah Jehan sent for the architect and went with him to the top of the mausoleum.

"Could you design another tomb as beautiful as this?" asked the emperor.

And on the man's replying that he would try, the sultan, who chose that the monument should have no rival, caused the architect to be thrown into the Jumna on the spot, where he was dashed to pieces at the foot of his masterpiece, which remains unique.

The fort, rising from a rock wall of rose-red sandstone, is reached by a series of drawbridges and bastions, now no longer needed and open to all comers.

The central square, formerly the Sultan Akbar's garden, is now a parade-ground for soldiers, and barracks occupy the site of ruined palaces. Still

some remains of ancient splendour are to be seen that have escaped the vandals.

Here, a white marble mosque with three flights of open arcades, with white domes to roof it, is paved with rectangular flags, each bordered with a fillet of black marble ending in an arch-like point, immovable prayer-carpets turned towards Mecca. Behind the marble lattices that form one wall of this mosque, the women of the zenana come to hear the moollah recite prayer.

Under a loggia, flowery with mosaics of jasper and carnelian, the emperor, seated on a white marble throne embroidered with carving, administered justice. At his feet, on a raised stone flag, the divan, his prime minister took down the despot's words, to transmit them to the people who were kept at a respectful distance under a colonnade, forming a verandah round the imperial palace.

And this morning I had seen in the place of Akbar or Jehangir, a sturdy, blowsy soldier, in his red coatee, his feet raised higher than his head, spread out in his wicker deck-chair, and reading the latest news just brought by the mail from Europe.

The sultana's mosque is quite small, of translucent milky-white marble, and close by it is a

red wall, hardly pierced by a narrow window with a stone screen, behind which Shah Jehangir was kept a prisoner for seven years.

Dewani Khas, the great hall of audience, on columns open on all sides to the sky and landscape, overlooks a pit about thirty paces away where tigers and elephants fought to divert the sultan and his court. At the threshold is a large block of black marble—the throne of Akbar the Great. At the time of the incursion of the Jâts, who drove the emperor from his palace, as soon as the usurper took his seat, the stone, the legend tells, split and shed blood; the iridescent stain remains to this day.

Above the throne, in the white marble wall, is a round hole, the mark of a cannon-ball at the time of the Mutiny. Out of this came a parrot, gravely perching to scratch its poll; then, alarmed at seeing us so close, it retired into its hole again.

Further on we came to a courtyard surrounded by a cloister, where the market for precious stones was held. The empress, invisible under her wrappers of gauze as thin as air, and surrounded by her women fanning her, would come out on her high balcony to choose the gems that pleased her for a moment by their sparkle, and then disappear into the gardens behind insurmountable walls. In another court, a

pool kept stocked with fish gave Shah Jehangir the pleasure of fancying he was fishing.

At one corner of a bastion of the rampart rises the Jasmine tower, the empress's pavilion, built of amber-toned marble inlaid with gold and mother-of-pearl. A double wall of pierced lattice, as fine as a hand-screen, enclosed the octagon chamber; the doors, which were of massive silver jewelled with rubies, have been removed. The golden lilies inlaid in the panels have also disappeared, roughly torn out and leaving the glint of their presence in a warmer hue, still faintly metallic. Recesses in the wall, like porticoes, served for hanging dresses in, and low down, holes large enough to admit the hand, were hiding-places for jewels, between two slabs of marble. In front of the sultana's kiosk, basins in the form of shells, from which rose-water poured forth, go down like steps to a tank below.

The subterranean passage leading from the empress's rooms to the mosque, has in the roof a thick flagstone that admits a subdued glimmer as through amber or honey, lighting up all one end of the dark corridor.

The sultan's bath is lined with panels of lapis lazuli framed in gold, and inlaid with mother-of-

pearl, or looking-glass, and the walls have little hollow niches for lamps, over which the water fell in a shower into a bath with a decoration of scroll-work. And in front of Jehangir's room, again a series of basins hollowed in the steps of a broad marble stair, where a stream of water fell from one to another.

We saw the Jasmine tower from a corner of the garden in the glow of sunset. With its gilt cupola blazing in the low beams, its amber-hued walls as transparent as melting wax, and its pierced screen-work, it looked so diaphanous, so fragile, that it might be carried away by the evening breeze. And beyond the pavilion, above the ramparts carved with huge elephants, lies the old Hindoo palace, deserted by Jehangir for his house of pale marbles—an endless palace, a labyrinth of red buildings loaded to the top with an agglomeration of ornament supporting flat roofs. And pagodas that have lost their doors, a work of destruction begun by Aurungzeeb. One court is still intact, overhung by seventy-two balconies, where the zenana could look on at the dancing of bayadères. Perfect, too, is the queen's private apartment, with two walls between which an army kept guard by day and by night.

A road between ancient trees and green fields which are perpetually irrigated leads to Sicandra-Bagh. Here, at the end of a wretched village of huts and hovels, is the magnificence of a stately portal of red stone broadly decorated with white; and then, through a garden where trees and shrubs make one huge bouquet, behold the imposing mass of the tomb of Akbar the Great. The mausoleum is on the scale of a cathedral. There are two stories of galleries in pink sandstone crowned by a marble pavilion with lace-like walls; and there, high up, is the sarcophagus of white stone, covered with inscriptions setting forth the nineteen names of Allah.

Near this tomb is a stele with the dish on the top of it in which the Koh-i-noor was found. In the crypt of the mosque, at the end of a passage, is a vaulted room lined with stucco and devoid of ornament, and here is the burial place of Akbar, a mound covered with lime. The sarcophagus above, at the foot of which the Koh-i-noor once blazed, is but the replica of this.

This cell is as dark as a cellar, barbarously squalid. But to all our questions the moollah who was our guide only replied:

"Nothing could be fine enough to be worthy of

Akbar, so this was made in a hurry that he might at least rest in peace without delay."

In the heart of Agra towards evening people were busy in the square of the Jumna Musjid stretching pieces of stuff over rather low poles to form a tent. Then in long file came the labourers from a famine-camp, with their sleep-walking gait, their glassy eyes, their teeth showing like those of a grinning skull. Rags in a thousand holes scarcely covered the horrors of their fleshless bodies.

The children of the bazaar watched them pass, holding out in their fingers scraps of food—the remains of cakes, green fruit, or handfuls of rice, and the famishing creatures quarrelled for the morsels, frightening the little ones, who fled. Then they disappeared silently under the awnings, filling the air with a smell of dust and pepper, scaring the pigeons away from the pool for ablutions, and the birds fluttered up in dismay in the rosy sunset glow, seeking some other refuge for the night.

JEYPOOR

Broad streets crossing each other at right angles; houses, palaces, archways flanked by towers, and colonnades, all alike covered with pink-washed plaster decorated with white. And all the buildings have the hasty, temporary appearance of a town run up for an exhibition to last only a few months.

There is a never-ending traffic of elephants, baggage-camels, and vehicles with shouting drivers; and on the ground are spread heaps of fruit, baskets for sale, glass baubles and weapons. In all the pink and white throng not an European dress is to be seen, not even one of the vile compounds adopted by the baboo, a striped flannel jacket over the dhoti. Men and women alike wear necklaces of flowers, or flowers in their hair; the children are gaudy with trinkets and glass beads.

The Rajah's residence, of plaster like the rest of the town, is pink too outside, but the interior is aggressive with paint of harsh colours. In the living rooms is shabby furniture, gilt chairs turned one over the other, as on the day after a ball. The curtains over the doors and windows are of silk,

but frayed and threadbare. In the shade of a marble court with carved columns, clerks are employed in counting money — handsome coins stamped with flowers and Indian characters, laid out in rows. They count them into bags round which soldiers mount guard.

Outside the palace is a large garden, devoid of shade, with pools of water bowered in flowers and shrubs that shelter myriads of singing birds. At the end of the park is a tank full of crocodiles. A keeper called the brutes, and they came up facing us in a row, their jaws open to catch the food which the Rajah amuses himself by throwing to them.

In the bazaar a light, glossy cheetah was being led round for an airing. The beast had on a sort of hood of silk stuck with peacock's feathers, which its keeper pulled down over its eyes when it saw a prey on which it was eager to spring; and with its eyes thus blinded, it would lick the hand that gave it an anna with a hot tongue as rough as a rasp.

A salesman of whom I had bought several things, wishing to do me a civility, called a tom-tom player, who was to escort me home rapping on his ass's

skin; and when I declined very positively, the poor man murmured with a piteous, crushed look:

"What a pity that the sahib does not like music!"

All about the town of pink plaster, in the dust of the roads and fields, are an endless number of dead temples—temples of every size and of every period; and all deserted, all empty; even those that are uninjured look like ruins.

And for an hour as we drove along towards Amber, the old town deserted in favour of modern Jeypoor, the same succession of temples wheeled past. The crenated walls enclose three hills, one of them crowned by a fortress, to defend erewhile the white palace mirrored in the waters of an artificial lake.

All round the Rajah's palace crowds a town of palaces, mosques, and temples dedicated to Vishnu; and outside the walls, on a plain lying between the hills of Amber, is another town, still thick with ruins amid the forest of encroaching trees. And it is all dead, deserted, dust-coloured, unspeakably sad, with the sadness of destruction and desertion in the midst of a landscape gorgeous with flowers and groves. In the palace of Amber, guides make a good

business of showing us the public rooms, baths, and bedrooms, all restored with an eye to the tourist. In the gardens, heavy with perfume, the trees display swinging balls of baked earth full of holes, which protect the ripening fruit from the monkeys; a whole tribe of them scampered off at our approach, and went to torment the peacocks that were solemnly promenading a path, and that presently flew away.

DELHI.

In the centre of the modern fort, a belt of walls with gates that form palaces under the arches, is the ancient residence of the Moguls. Beyond the barracks full of native and English soldiers, we reached the cool silence of the throne-room. Colonnades of red stone surround a throne of white marble inlaid with lilies in carnelian on tall stems of jasper. All round this throne, to protect it from the tourists, but also as if to emphasize its vanity, is a railing.

On the very edge of the Jumna, where russet fields break the monotony of its white sandy banks, is the private state-room, the residence of the sovereigns of Delhi, built of translucent milky

marble, warmed by the reflection of gold inlaid on the columns and merged with the stone that is turned to amber.

Under the white dome a wooden ceiling, gilt in the hollows of the carving, has taken the place of an earlier ceiling of massive silver, worth seventy lacs of rupees, which was carried off by the conquerors after some long-ago seizure of the city. Inside, by way of walls, are carvings in marble of twisted lilies, inconceivably graceful and light. And then, at one of the entrances, those marble lattices, once gilt and now bereft of their gold, look just like topaz in the midday sun. After that magic splendour of gold and marbles fused to topaz and amber, the rest of the palace—the sleeping-rooms, the couches inlaid with mosaic flowers, the pierced stone balconies overlooking the Jumna—all seemed commonplace and familiar.

From a quite small garden close to the palace a bronze gate with three medallions of lilies in high relief, of marvellous workmanship, opens on the Pearl Mosque, exquisitely white, at the end of its forecourt of immaculate pavement enclosed by a marble balustrade. Three polished and shining domes are supported by columns of snow made of a hard white marble, scarcely broken by orna-

ment, and carrying a roof hollowed into three vaults. The rings are still to be seen on the marble walls outside, to which, when the great Mogul came to prayer, curtains were attached made of gold net and spangled with diamonds and pearls.

In the evening I was to dine with the officers of the Artillery mess, and in going I lost my way. Suddenly before me stood the amber palace, with blue shadows, moon-coloured, the carvings like opal in changing hues of precious gems. Half hidden by a growth of jasmine that loaded the air with fragrance, up rose the cupolas of the little mosque, like pearls reflecting the sparkle of the stars.

Outside the town of Delhi a road bordered by great trees leads across the white plain, all strewn with temples and tombs, to Khoutab, the ancient capital of the Moguls—a dead city, where the ruins still standing in many places speak of a past of unimaginable splendour. There is a colossal tower of red masonry that springs from the soil with no basement; it is reeded from top to bottom, gradually growing thinner as it rises, with fillets of letters in relief, and balconies on brackets as light as ribbands alternating to the top. It is an enormous mass of red stone, which the ages have scarcely discoloured,

and was built by Khoutab-Oudeen Eibek to commemorate his victory over the Sultan Pithri-Raj, the triumph of Islam over Brahminism.

To reach this tower in its garden of flowering shrubs the way is under the Alandin gate of pink sandstone; the name evokes a tale of wonder, and the pointed arch, exquisitely noble in its curve, looks like pale vellum, graven all over with ornaments, and inscriptions to the glory of Allah.

Close to the monumental trophy of Khoutab is a temple with columns innumerable, and all different, overloaded with carvings incised and in relief, with large capitals; beams meet and cross under the roof, also carved in the ponderous stone, and the whole forms a cloister round a court; while in the centre, amid Moslem tombs, an iron pillar stands, eight metres high, a pillar of which there are seven metres sunk in the ground—a colossal casting placed here in 317, when half the civilized world was as yet ignorant of the art of working in metal. An inscription records that "King Dhava, a worshipper of Vishnu, set up this pillar to commemorate his victory over the Belikas of Sindhu."

And side by side with history a pleasing legend tells that King Anang-Pal yearned to atone for his faults and redeem the earth from sin. So by the

counsels of a wise Brahmin he caused this vast iron spike to be forged by giants, to be driven into the earth and pierce the serpent Sechnaga, who upholds the world. The deed was done, but because certain disbelieving men denied that the monster was dead, the king caused the weapon to be pulled up, and at the end of it behold the stain of blood; so the iron beam was driven in again. But the spell was broken—the creature had escaped. The column remained unstable, prefiguring the end of the dynasty of Anang, and the serpent still works his wicked will.

Only one entrance to the temple remains, built of polished red stone mingled harmoniously with marble, toned by time to a warm golden hue almost rose-colour. All the profusion of Indian design is lavished on this gateway framing the marvel erected by Pal. Tangles of interlacing letters incised and in relief, mingling with trails of flowers as lissom as climbing plants, and supporting figures of gods; while a fine powdering of white dust over the dimmed warm yellow of marble and sandstone softens yet more the carved flowers and sinuous patterns, amid which the images sit in tranquil attitudes.

A roofless mausoleum is that of the Sultan

Altamsh, who desired to sleep for ever with no vault over his tomb but that of the heavens; a vast hall, its walls wrought with inscriptions in Persian, Hindostanee, and Arabic, built of brick-red granite and yellow marble softened to pale orange in the golden sunshine. Here and there traces may be seen of wall-paintings, green and blue, but quite faded, and now merely a darker shadow round the incised ornament. Hibiscus shrubs mingle their branches over the tomb and drop large blood-red blossoms on the stone sarcophagus. Further on is another mausoleum, in such good preservation that it has been utilized as a bungalow for some official.

After passing the temples and tombs that surround the Khoutab, the town of ruins lies scattered over the plain of pale sand and withered herbage.

A prodigious palace has left the skeleton of its walls pierced with large windows, and in the blackened stone, almost at the top of the building, a balcony with a canopy over it, resting on fragile columns, is still uninjured; of a pale yellow, like lemon-tree wood, it looks as if it had come into existence only yesterday, a flower risen from the death of the ruins.

Huge vultures were prowling about the place.

At our approach they flapped a little away, and then perching on a heap of stones preened their feathers with clumsy, ungraceful movements.

A tank here is deep below ground, down three flights of galleries. Quite at the bottom is a little stagnant water, into which children leap from the top of the structure, a plunge of twenty metres, ending in a great splash of green mud that smells of water-lilies and grease.

More and yet more palaces; remains of marble porticoes and columns, walls covered with tiles glittering in the blazing sunshine like topaz and emerald; and over all the peace of dust and death, the only moving thing those vultures, in shades of dull grey almost indistinguishable from the colour of the stones.

And suddenly, emerging from the ruins, we came on a Moslem street with high walls, windowless, and waving plumes of banyan and palm trees rising above the houses.

At the top of the street a caravan of moollahs were performing their devotions at the tomb of a Mohammedan saint, whose sarcophagus was enclosed within a balustrade of marble and a border of lilies, alternately yellow and green, with large full-blown flowers in blue, fragile relics that have

survived for centuries amid ruins that are comparatively recent.

The road goes on. Trees cast their shade on the flagstone pavement, but between the houses and through open windows the sandy plain may be seen, the endless whiteness lost in a horizon of dust.

And again ruins. Under an archway still left standing on piers carved with lilies and foliage, lay a whole family of pariahs covered with leprosy and sores.

Close to a village that has sprouted under the baobab-trees, in the midst of the plain that once was Khoutab, in the court of a mosque, is the marble sarcophagus of a princess. Grass is growing in the hollow of the stone that covers her, in fulfilment of the wishes of the maiden, who in her humility desired that when she was dead she should be laid to rest under the common earth whence the grass grows in the spring. And not far from the rajah's daughter, under a broad tamarind tree, in the blue shade, is the tomb of Kushru, the poet who immortalized Bagh-o-Bahar. On the sarcophagus, in the little kiosk, was a kerchief of silk and gold, with a wreath of fresh flowers renewed every day by the faithful.

A humble poet, more venerated than the kings whose superb mausoleums are crumbling to dust in subjugated India, who, though she forgets her past, is still true to her dreams.

Another magnificent temple, with marble arcades wrought to filigree, curved in frilled arches, on spindle-like columns that soar to support the cupolas, as light as flower-stems. A gem of whiteness and sheen in the desert of ruins where yet stand three matchless marvels: the tower of Khoutab, the gate of Alandin, and the column of Dhava.

Toglackabad, again an ancient Delhi, a rock on the bank of the Jumna after crossing a white desert; walls of granite, massive bastions, battlemented towers of a Saracen stamp, rough-hewn, devoid of ornament, and uniform in colour—bluish with light patches of lichen. The enclosure has crumbled into ruin, in places making breaches in the walls, which nevertheless preserve the forbidding aspect of an impregnable citadel.

Entering by one of the fourteen gates in the ramparts of stone blocks scarcely hewn into shape, the city of palaces and mosques is found in ruins, matching the fortifications, without any decoration,

and all of the same cold grey hue, like a city of prisons.

At a short distance from Toglackabad, on a solitary rock, stands a square building of massive architecture, sober in outline, and crowned by a stone dome. It dwells alone, surrounded by walls; the mausoleum of Toglack, containing his tomb with that of his wife and his son, Mohammed the Cruel.

And there are ruins all the way to Delhi, whither we returned by the old fortress of Purana Kila, with its pink walls overlooked by a few aerial minarets and more traces of graceful carving, the precursors of the Divan i Khas and Moti Musjid the Pearl Mosque.

In the town camels were harnessed to a sort of carriage like a hut perched on misshapen wheels, and rumbling slowly through the streets, seeming very heavy at the heels of the big beast with its shambling gait.

To the Chandni Chowk—the bazaar. In a miniature-painter's shop was a medley of ivories, of boxes inlaid with silver and ebony, and toys carved in sandal-wood.

The artist sat at work in a corner of the window, copying minutely, for the thousandth time perhaps, a Taj or a Moti Musjid. Quite unmoved while his

shopman displayed his wares, he worked on with brushes as fine as needles; but when, on leaving, I asked him where I could procure some colours I needed, "Then the sahib paints?" said he; and he rose at once, insisted on my taking a seat, pressed me to accept a little sandal-wood frame, as a fellow-artist, and then would positively paint my portrait.

In a little alley of booths was a shop with no front show, and behind it a sort of studio full of carvers and artists working on sandal-wood boxes, ivory fans as fine as gauze, and wooden lattices with elaborate flower patterns, used to screen the zenana windows. And in little recesses workmen dressed in white, with small copper pots about them in which they had brought rice for their meals, were chasing and embossing metal with little taps of their primitive tools, never making a mistake, working as their fancy might suggest, without any pattern, and quite at home in the maze of interlacing ornament.

In order that I might be far from the noise of the street the merchant had the objects I wished to see brought to me in a little room over the shop. Everything was spread before me on a white sheet, in the middle of which I sat. Refreshments were

brought, fruits and sweetmeats, while a coolie waved a large fan over my head—a huge palm-leaf stitched with bright-hued silks.

In the distance we heard a sound of pipes, and the merchant hastened out to call the nautch-girls, who began to dance in the street just below us, among the vehicles and foot-passengers. There were two of them; one in a black skirt spangled with silver trinkets, the other in orange and red with a head-dress and necklace of jasmine. They danced with a gliding step, and then drew themselves up with a sudden jerk that made all their frippery tinkle. Then the girl in black, laying her right hand on her breast, stood still, with only a measured swaying movement of her whole body, while the dancer in yellow circled round, spinning as she went. Next the black one performed a sort of goose-step with her feet on one spot, yelling a so-called tune, and clacking her anklets one against the other. Then, after a few high leaps that set her saree flying, the dance was ended; she drew a black veil over her head, and turned with her face to the wall. The other boldly asked for backsheesh, held up her hands, and after getting her money, begged for cakes and sugar.

In the evening to the theatre—a Parsee theatre; a large tent, reserved for women on one side by a hanging of mats. The public were English soldiers and baboos with their children, and in the cheapest places a packed crowd of coolies.

The manager also traded in clocks, and a selection was displayed for sale at one end of the stalls.

The orchestra, consisting of a harmonium, a violin, and a darboukha, played a languishing, drawling air to a halting rhythm, while the chorus, standing in a line on the stage, sang the introductory verses.

The actors were exclusively men and boys, those who took female parts wore rusty wigs over their own long, black hair; these were plaited on each side of the face, and waxed behind to fall over the shoulders. The costumes of velvet and satin, heavily embroidered with gold and silver, were hideous.

The scenery was preposterous: red and green flowers growing on violet boughs, with forests in the background of pink and yellow trees; perspective views of streets, in which the houses were climbing over each other, and finally a purple cavern under a brilliant yellow sky.

The actors spoke their parts like lessons, with a gesture only now and then, and invariably wrong;

and they all spoke and sang through the nose in an irritating voice pitched too high.

The play was *Gul-E-Bakaoli.*

King Zainulmulook has lost his sight, and can recover it only if someone will bring to him a miraculous flower from the garden of Bakaoli. His four sons set out in search of it. Zainulmulook has a fifth son, named Tazulmulook. At the birth of this child the king has had his horoscope cast by the astrologers of the palace, who declared that the king would become blind if he should see his son before his twelfth year; but hunting one day the king has met Tazulmulook, who was walking in the forest, and has lost his sight.

In a jungle we now see Tazulmulook banished and solitary, and he relates his woes.

The four sons of the king presently come to a town. They ring at the door of a house inhabited by a woman who, as the little English translation tells us, carries on a foul trade, and Dilbar the dancing-girl appears.

This Dilbar was a boy with a more woolly wig than the others, and to emphasize her sex wore a monstrous display of trinkets round her neck and arms, in her ears and nose.

Dilbar dances and sings before the brothers, and

then proposes to play cards. The stake is the liberty of the loser. The four princes play against the dancing-girl, who wins and has them imprisoned on the spot.

Tazulmulook arrives in the same town, and is on the point of ringing at Dilbar's door when he is hindered by his father's vizier, who tells him how many times this dangerous woman has been the ruin of kings' sons. But Tazulmulook, in a discourse on valour addressed to the audience, who stamped applause, rejects the counsels of prudence and rings at the dancer's door. Tazulmulook wins the game with Dilbar, and compels her to release his brothers, but only after branding each on the back of his neck.

The young prince then goes on his way in search of the magical flower. He is about to rest awhile in a cavern, but at the moment when he lies down on a stone it is transformed into a monster made of bladder, which rears itself enraged in the air with a trumpet-cry. By good luck the king's son calls upon the aid of the prophet Suleiman, whom the dragon also reveres, and the pacified monster conveys Tazulmulook to the garden of Bakaoli, and, moreover, gives him a ring which will be a talisman in danger.

Tazulmulook finds Bakaoli asleep in her garden, and after plucking the miraculous flower he exchanges the ring for that of the princess and departs. Bakaoli awakes, and discovering the theft of the flower and of her ring is much disturbed, and gives orders that the thief is to be caught.

Tazulmulook on his way meets a blind man, whom he restores to sight by the help of the magical flower; the man relates the story of the cure to the four brothers, who quickly follow up Tazulmulook and presently overtake him. After a short conflict they rob him of the talisman and fly. The young prince is in despair, but as he wrings his hands he rubs Bakaoli's ring and the dragon instantly appears. Tazulmulook commands him forthwith to build a palace in front of that of King Zainulmulook.

While all this is going forward in the jungle, Bakaoli, disguised as an astrologer, comes to the king, to whom she promises the coming of the miraculous flower, and even while she is speaking the return of the four princes is announced.

The old king is at once cured; he embraces his sons again and again. After this emotion the first thing he remarks is the new palace that has sprung from the ground exactly opposite his own.

He, with his four sons, goes to pay a call on Tazulmulook, whom he does not recognize in his palace, when suddenly Dilbar arrives to claim her prisoners. The fifth son then relates to the king the deeds of his elder brothers, and in proof of his words points to the mark each of them bears on his neck. The king anathematizes the princes, and sends them to prison, but loads Tazulmulook with honours and affection.

Bakaoli, having returned to her own country, sends her confidante, named Hammala, with a letter to Tazulmulook, who at once follows the messenger. The prince and the queen fall in love with each other. Bakaoli's mother finds them together, and furious at the disobedience of her daughter, who is affianced to another rajah, she calls up a djinn to plunge Tazulmulook in a magic fount. The prince finds himself transformed into a devil with horns, and wanders about the jungle once more. There he meets a pariah woman with three children, who begs him to marry her. Tazulmulook in despair leaps back into the spring to die there, and to his great surprise recovers his original shape.

Bakaoli bewails her lover's departure, for which no one, not even her mother, can comfort her.

Tazulmulook, again an outcast in the jungle, rescues a lady related to Bakaoli from the embrace of a demon, and she in gratitude takes the prince to Bakaoli's court. So at last the lovers are united and married.

This interminable piece, with twenty changes of scene, dragged its weary length till two in the morning. One by one the soldiers went away; even the baboos soon followed them, and only the coolies remained, enthusiastically applauding every scene, every harangue, in a frenzy of delight, before the final apotheosis of Tazulmulook and Bakaoli, as man and wife, lovingly united against a background of trees with golden boughs.

AMRITSUR

In the midst of the Lake of Immortality stands a marble temple with a roof and decorations of gold. All round the sacred lake palaces of delicate hue form a circle about the sanctuary, which glistens in the sun, its gilding and pale-tinted marbles reflected like the gleam of precious stones in the calm, sheeny, deeply transparent water.

A causeway of white stone, with a fragile balus-

trade and columns bearing lanterns of gold, leads from the shore to the temple.

Inside the building, under a silken Persian rug, stretched like an awning, there were piles of coin on a cloth spread on the ground, with flowers, rice, and sweetmeats offered there. In a recess was a band of musicians—tom-toms and fiddles—scarcely audible in the turmoil of shouted prayers and the chatter of the faithful.

At the end of a passage that runs round the temple an old woman who had just been bathing was changing her wet saree for a dry one, and appeared quite stripped, dropping her garments, and careful only not to let her face be seen.

There was at the top of the temple a sarcophagus in a shrine, on which were masses of impalpable silk gauze embroidered with gold, which looked like a peacock's breast, so subtle were the transparent colours lying one above another—green, blue, and yellow predominating, gauze so light that the slightest breath set it floating in glistening and changing hues; and on the snowy white pavement of the floor was strewn a carpet of very pale lilac lilies and *mindi* flowers.

LAHORE

The same ubiquitous terminus on a sandy plain, remote from everything; then a drive jolting through bogs, and we reached the dirty, scattered town crowded with people who had collected round a sort of fair with booths for mountebanks, and roundabouts of wooden horses.

In an alley of the bazaar girls were lounging in hammocks hung to nails outside the windows, smoking and spitting down on the world below.

A delightful surprise was a museum of Indian art, the first I had seen, a fine collection and admirably arranged;* but the natives who resorted hither to enjoy the cool shelter of the galleries talked to each other from a distance, as is their universal custom, at the top of their voices, which rang doubly loud under the echoing vaults.

The ancient palace of the kings of Lahore. Amid the ruins there is a mosque of red stone flowered

* By Mr. John Lockwood Kipling, for many years the curator and head of the art schools at Lahore.—*Translator.*

with white marble, the cupola of a material so milky that it might be jade; and the structure is mirrored in a pool of clear water, dappled with sun-sparks over the rose-coloured stones at the bottom.

Another mausoleum is of lace-like carving in marble, the roof painted with Persian ornament; and the whole thing is uninjured, as fresh as if it had been wrought yesterday, under the broad shade of theobromas and cedars that have grown up among the ruins.

Behind a ponderous wall, dinted all over by shot, and showing broad, light patches once covered by earthenware tiles, is the palace of Runjeet Singh, inlaid with enamelled pictures in green, blue, and yellow of tiger-fights and horse-races, mingling with flowers and garlands of boughs. The durbar, the hall or presence chamber, opens by a verandah on a forecourt paved with marble; in its walls are mirrors and panels of coloured glass over a ground of dull gold, agate-like tints iridescent with a nacreous, silvery, luminous lustre.

In one vast hall were ancient weapons, swords and pistols, enriched with precious stones; suits of armour damascened with gold, guns with silver stocks set with pearls, and a whole battery of field-pieces to be carried on camels' backs and spit out

tiny balls—enormously, absurdly long, still perched on their saddle-shaped carriages. And in a window bay two toy cannon made of gold and silver, with which Dhuleep Singh used to play as a child before he lost his realm.

At two or three leagues from Lahore, in a city of ruins, opposite a tumble-down mosque which is strewing a powdering of rose-coloured stones on its white marble court, stands the tomb of Jehangir, splendid, and more splendid amid the squalor that surrounds it.

The sarcophagus rests in the depths of a vaulted crypt lighted only by narrow latticed loopholes, and it is shrouded in a mysterious glimmer, a mingling of golden sunbeams and the reflections from the marble walls inlaid with precious stones.

On the tomb, in elegant black letters, is this inscription:

"*Here lies Jehangir, Conqueror of the World.*"

As we returned to Lahore the palace rose before us among trees, a strip of wall, uninjured, covered with sapphire and emerald tiles; a fragile minaret crowning a tower bowered in flowering shrubs—and then the vision was past. The carriage drove on for

a long way by ruins and vestiges of beauty, and re-entered the town, where lanterns were being lighted over the throng that pushed and hustled about the fair.

RAWAL PINDI

From Lahore hither is an almost uninterrupted series of encampments—English and native regiments established in huts in the open fields far from every town, close only to the railway line. At one station a detachment of Indian guards were drawn up, and Abibulla declared from the number of men that they must be expecting a general at least; but nothing was discharged from the train but some cases of rupees, checked off by two English officers, and then carried to the barracks under the escort of sepoys.

This Rawal Pindi is an English town of cottages surrounded by lawns and shrubberies; about two streets of bazaar, and red uniforms everywhere, Highland soldiers in kilts, white helmets, and the officers' and sergeants' wives airing their Sunday finery in their buggies. The ladies drive themselves, under the shelter of a sunshade on an all

too short stick, painfully held by a hapless native servant clinging to the back of the carriage in a dislocating monkey-like attitude.

A regiment of artillery was marching into quarters. The Highlanders' band came out to meet them: four bagpipes, two side drums, and one big drum. They repeat the same short strain, simple enough, again and again; in Europe I should, perhaps, think it trivial, almost irritating, but here, filling me as it does with reminiscences of Brittany, especially after the persistent horror of tom-toms and shrill pipes, it strikes me as delightful—I even follow the soldiers to their quarters.

Among the officers was a young lady on horseback, her black habit covered with dust. Instead of the pith helmet that the English ladies disfigure themselves by wearing, she had a straw hat with a long cambric scarf as a pugaree. She was pretty and sat well, and at the last turning she pulled up and watched the men, the ammunition and the baggage all march past, saluted them with her switch, and cantered off to the town of "cottages." I saw her again in the afternoon, taking tea in her garden as she sat on a packing-case among eviscerated bales, and giving orders to a mob of slow, clumsy coolies, who were arranging the house.

All round the post-office there is invariably a crowd of natives scribbling in pencil on post-cards held in their left hands. Their correspondence is lengthy, minute, and interminable; in spite of their concentration and look of reflection I could never bring myself to take them seriously, or feel that they were fully responsible for their thoughts and acts—machines only, wound up by school teaching, some going out of order and relapsing into savages and brutes.

Stones flying, sticks thrown—at a little pariah girl, whose shadow as she passed had defiled the food of a Brahmin. He merely threw away the rice, which the dogs soon finished; but the by-standers who had witnessed the girl's insolence in going so near the holy man—she so base and unworthy—flew at the unhappy creature, who ran away screaming, abandoning a load of wood she was carrying on her head.

PESHAWUR

As we approached the Afghan frontier, camp followed camp, clustering round the railway stations that lie closer together on the line. In the morning and towards evening there was a constant hum round the train, of bagpipes, bugles, and drums, and the red or grey ranks were to be seen of soldiers at drill.

Near the sepoys' tents long lines of mules picketed by their feet stood by the guns; and further on baggage-camels, lying down, were hardly distinguishable from the russet grass and the scorched ochre sand.

There are two towns of Peshawur: one a distracted, silly place, with no beginning nor end, straggling along something in the manner of Madras, with an embryonic bazaar and all the amusements demanded by soldiers; the other enclosed in walls of dried mud, which are preserved only "to protect the town from robbers."

In this Peshawur the houses are crowded along narrow, crooked alleys, and there is but one rather wider street of shops, which here already have a quite

Persian character, having for sale only the products of Cabul or Bokhara. The balconies, the shutters, the verandahs and galleries are of wood inlaid in patterns like spider-net. The timbers are so slight that they would seem quite useless and too fragile to last; and yet they are amazingly strong, and alone remain in place, amid heaps of stones, in houses that have fallen into ruin. In the streets, the contrast is strange, of tiny houses with the Afghans, all over six feet high, superb men wearing heavy dhotis of light colours faded to white, still showing in the shadow of the folds a greenish-blue tinge of dead turquoise. Solemn and slow, or motionless in statuesque attitudes while they converse in few words, and never gesticulate, they are very fine, with a fierce beauty; their large, open eyes are too black, and their smile quite distressingly white in faces where the muscles look stiff-set. Even the children, in pale-hued silk shirts, are melancholy, languid, spiritless, but very droll, too, in their little pointed caps covered with gold braid, and the finery of endless metal necklaces, and bangles on their ankles and arms.

In one of the alleys by the outer wall was a little house with a door in carved panels framing

inlaid work as delicate as woven damask. A crowd surrounding it could not be persuaded by Abibulla's eloquence to make way for me, a suspicious-looking stranger.

In this house abode the postmaster of the Persian mails, and I wanted to register a letter for Cabul.

Abibulla delivered a long harangue through the closed door; at last a wicket was opened, framing an eye. I was invited to approach, and then, after examination, the wicket in the polished door was abruptly closed!

There was a sort of murmur behind the door, like reciting a prayer, then louder tones, indeed a very loud shout, repeated three times by several voices at once; and then the one alone continued in a dull chant. The door was half opened and I was beckoned, but to enter alone.

On the threshold I was desired to take off my shoes, because I was going into the presence of a holy man. As I crossed the forecourt fresh and ferocious shouts rang out; a curtain was lifted, and in a room scarcely lighted by a tiny window, the air thick with smoke, I could just make out a number of men, all standing, very excited, gesticulating wildly, and once more they shouted their savage cry.

At the back of the room the master of the house squatted on the floor, dressed in green richly embroidered with gold, and on his head was a vase-shaped cap or tiara of astrakhan. Near him, in an armchair, sat a perfectly naked fakir, his breast covered with jade necklaces. His face was of superhuman beauty, emaciated, with a look of suffering, his eyes glowing with rapt ecstasy. He seemed to be entranced, seeing nothing but a vision, and intoxicated by its splendour.

Then starting to his feet, and stretching out his arm to point at me, he poured forth invective in sharp, rapid speech. The words flowed without pause:—

"Dog! traitor! cruel wretch! eater of meat!——"

And then seeing that I did not go, that on wakening again from his dream I was still there, he fixed his eyes on me and caught sight of a medal that I wear.

"Kali?" he asked.

"No; the Virgin Mary."

"What is the Virgin Mary?"

"The mother of Christ."

"Ah, your Kali, then?"

"No; Kali is a cruel, bloodthirsty goddess, while the Virgin——"

He interrupted me:

"She is the mother of Christ, you say? You are a stranger, and you cannot know all the mischief they do us in the name of her Son."

While I was talking to the postmaster the fakir smoked a hookah, burning amber powder and rose-leaves. The air was full of the narcotic fragrance; a piercing perfume that mounted to the brain.

Another fakir, a young man, had come to sit at the elder's feet, and when I had finished my business the "holy man" began to knead his disciple's muscles, wringing and disjointing his arms and dislocating his left shoulder; and, as if in mockery of my distressed expression, he bent the lad's back inwards till his face was between his heels, and left him for a long minute in that torturing position.

When at last the boy was allowed to return to his place in a corner he sat quite still, his eyes staring stupidly and shedding large tears, though not a muscle of his face moved.

In the close-shut room the air, loaded with scent and smoke, was quite unbreathable; musicians playing behind a partition added to the irritating effect of all this perfume and noise.

As I was leaving, the fakir rose amid the cries of all the people, who clamoured for his blessing. He

silenced them by a sign, then laying one hand on my shoulder, after looking at my medal—

"Farewell," said he, "and may the Almighty protect you, for you look kind."

The throng outside had increased; Abibulla could scarcely make way for me to the end of the street, and for a long time I could still hear the cries that reached us at a distance.

Off next morning to the Khyber Pass. The road lay across the vast monotonous plain, richly productive all the way from Peshawur to the foot of the hills. At one end of a field some men had spread a net and were beating the field towards the corners with a heavy rope that broke down the tall oats; before long the birds were seen struggling under the meshes, but they were soon caught and carried away in cages.

Outside the fort which guards the opening of the pass there was confusion; a mad scurry of men, running, shouting, hustling. Quite a complicated *mêlée* of animals bolting, elephants and camels let loose and impossible to overtake, but caught at last.

After the delay, which in India is a matter of course, the caravan set out—the last to go; for during the past three months no European had

crossed the pass, and in consequence of misunderstandings with some of the rebel tribes to the north, even the natives were prohibited henceforth from going to Cabul.

First went six armed regulars, then a party on horseback, for the most part Persians, one of whom was carrying in his arms an enormous sheaf of roses, which hid him completely and drooped over the saddle.

Suddenly there was a panic among the horses; they shied, reared, and bolted across the fields, and the road being cleared, the elephants belonging to the Ameer of Cabul went by, to march at the head of the caravan. Next came a thousand camels, also the Ameer's; like the elephants, they carried no baggage, but on the back of one female was a young one, tied into a basket, born only the day before, all white and woolly.

Asses followed, oxen and more camels, loaded beyond their strength with old iron, tin pannikins, a whole cargo of goods in cases from Manchester and Sheffield—so badly packed that things came clattering down as the beasts pushed each other amid oaths and blows.

Women porters came on foot, hidden under bales, nets full of crocks, faggots, and trusses of hay.

Children, and women in sarees—fine ladies—had nothing to carry; some were wrapped in *yashmacks*, shrouding them from head to foot with a little veil of transparent muslin over their eyes.

And to close the procession came more soldiers.

After inspecting my little permit to visit the Khyber, the officials at the fort had placed in my carriage a soldier of the native Khyber rifle-corps, six feet six in height, placid and gentle. When I got out of the carriage to walk up a hill he would follow a yard or so behind, and watching all my movements, looked rather as if he were taking me to prison than like an escort to protect me.

We left the caravan far behind. In the gorge with its rosy-pink soil the silence was exquisite, the air had the freshness of a mountain height, and quite inexplicably amid these barren rocks, where there was not a sign of vegetation, there was a scent of honey and almonds.

Children were selling whortleberries in plaited baskets; they came up very shyly, and as soon as they had sold their spoil hurried back to hide in their nook. Further on a little Afghan boy, standing alone and motionless by the roadside, held out three eggs for sale.

At a turn in the road the view opened out to a

distant horizon; the plain of Peshawur, intensely green in contrast with the rosy tone of the foreground; and far away the Himalayas, faintly blue with glaciers of fiery gold in the sun, against a gloomy sky where the clouds were gathering.

Between the cliff-walls of the defile, in a sort of bay, stands Ali Musjid, a little white mosque where travellers tarry to pray.

Deeply graven in the stone of one of the walls is the giant hand of Ali the Conqueror, the terrible, who came from the land of the Arabs, killing all on his way who refused to be converted to Islam. And he died in the desolate Khyber, where all who pass do him honour, and entreat his protection on their way.

Above the mausoleum a fort with battlements towers over the pass, "an impregnable position," the guides tell us.

A company of the Khyber Rifles are quartered there in the old buildings and the officers' deserted bungalows; over all hangs an atmosphere of icy desolation and overpowering melancholy. Above our heads a flight of eagles wheeled against the sky.

As we stood up there the caravan for Cabul came in sight on the road below, and slowly disappeared wrapped in dust, with mechanical steadiness and

without a sound. After that came the other train of travellers from Peshawur, singing to the accompaniment of mule-bells, every sound swelled by the echo. Children's laughter came up to our ears, the scream of an elephant angry at being stopped—even at a distance we could still hear them a little—and then silence fell again under the flight of the eagles soaring in circles further and further away as they followed the caravan.

Close to us on each level spot of the scarped rock was a little fortified look-out where three or four soldiers kept watch, with here and there a larger tower, reached only by a ladder, and in these six or eight men.

Beyond this point among the mountains the road seemed to vanish, to lead nowhere, lost in pale red among the red cliffs, as if it stopped at the foot of the rocky wall.

As we went back we found the roses carried in the morning by the Persian strewn on the ground in front of the Ali Musjid, and over them a flock of birds with red beaks were fluttering.

Then at Peshawur again in the evening, girls, with groups of soldiers in red jackets or Scotch kilts; the common women were horrible, whitened,

with loose shirts and tight-fitting trousers. One alone sat at her window wreathed about with *mindi* flowers in the crude light of a lamp. The others accosted the passer-by, laughing and shouting in shrill tones.

In one room we heard music—guzlas, drums, and a vina. There were three dancing-girls. At first they only performed the Indian "goose-step," the slow revolutions growing gradually quicker. But urged by the soldiers who filled the room and beat time with their sticks on the floor, the nautch-girls marked their steps, wriggled with heavy awkward movements, and tried to dance a Highland jig, taught by two Scotch soldiers.

A dark street corner where there were no shops. Under a canopy constructed of four bamboos thatched with straw, a young man in a light-coloured dhoti was sitting on a low stool; about him were women singing. Presently one of them came forward, and dipping her fingers into three little copper pots that stood on the ground in front of the youth, she took first oil, then a green paste, and finally some perfume with which she touched seven spots—the lad's feet, knees, shoulders, and turban. Then she wiped her fingers on the saree of the bridegroom's mother—for he was to be

married on the morrow—who was standing behind her son.

After her another woman repeated the ceremony, and then they went away, still singing. This went on for part of the evening. When it was all over they went to eat rice at the bridegroom's house, and meanwhile the same ceremony had been performed with the bride, whom her neighbours had taken it by turns to anoint and perfume, in a house closed against prying eyes.

When the dead are to be honoured in this land each true believer lays a pebble as homage on the tomb, and the dead man's repute is estimated by the size of the pile of stones that covers him.

Not far from Peshawur a legend had arisen concerning a certain Guru, that the holy man now underground grew taller every year by a foot, and the heap of stones grew longer day by day, till the English authorities had to interfere and place a guard of soldiers to check the encroachment of the tumulus on the high road.

MURREE

We left Rawal Pindi in a tonga. The night was black, the carriage had no lamps; but now and again, at the sound of the driver's horn, dark masses—baggage camels, scarcely distinguishable in the gloom—made way for us to go past at a gallop.

We changed horses every five miles; ill-kempt little beasts, and only half fed, who got through their stage only by the constant application of the whip, and shouts from the sais standing on the step; when released from harness they stood forlorn and hobbled off, lame of every leg, to their stables with no litter. Day broke, a dingy grey, dark with woolly cloud and heavy rain; a wall of fog rose up around us, while the road was uphill towards the mountains.

The fog seemed to turn to solid smoke, impenetrably black, wrapping us in darkness which was suddenly rent by a red flash, blood-red, ending in a green gleam. The mist retained a tint of sulphurous copper for some time; then a second flash, and far away among the lurid clouds we had a glimpse of the Himalayas, pallid purple with green shadows against an inky sky. The

thunder, deadened by the masses of snow and very distant, rolled to and fro with a hollow sound, frightening the horses which struggled uphill at a frantic pace. And the dense fog closed round us once more, a dark green milkiness streaked with snow, which was falling in large flakes formed of four or five clinging together like the petals of flowers. Then it hailed, which completely maddened the horses, and then again snow, and it was literally night at ten in the morning when at last we reached this spot and the shelter of a bungalow.

The storm raged on all day, bringing down clouds that swept the earth and yawned in cataracts, to the awful roar of the thunder that shook the foundation of rock.

GARHI

A day in the tonga. Early in the morning through snow, and past forests where huge pines were felled by yesterday's storm; then, after descending a hill in a thaw that melted the clay soil into red mud, we came to a felted carpet of flowers as close as they could lie, without leaves; violets, and red and white tulips swaying on slender stems. And here again were the song of birds, and fragrance in the soft, clear air.

Halting at noon at Kohala, we found a barber in the open street shaving and snipping his customers. In a cage hanging to the bough of a tree above his head a partridge was hopping about—black speckled with white, and gold-coloured wings. It had a strident cry like the setting of a saw.

As soon as the last customer's beard was trimmed, the barber took down the cage and carried the bird to another spot whence we could hear its scream.

Above the road lie dark cliffs; a rose-coloured waterfall of melted snow tumbled mixing with the clay—pink with lilac depths, and the foam iridescent in the sunbeams. The ruins of a large temple of green stone carved with myriads of fine lines stood in solitude at the edge of a wood, and the background was the mountain-range, the Himalayas, lost in the sky and bathed in blue light. Only a portico remains standing—a massive, enduring frame for the infinite distance of snow-capped giants. The stones have lost their hue; they are darkly streaked by the rains and a growth of grey and purple mosses, and russet or white lichens have eaten into the surface.

All the architectural details are effaced; parasites and creepers have overgrown the old-world carvings.

SRINAGAR

Still the tonga; uphill and down, over the hilly country, with a horizon of dull, low mountains, and the horses worse and worse, impossible to start but by a storm of blows. Towards evening a particularly vicious pair ended by overturning us into a ditch full of liquid mud. The sais alone was completely immersed, and appealed loudly to Rama with shrieks of terror. Abibulla on his part, after making sure that the sahibs and baggage were all safe and sound, took off his shoes, spread his dhoti on the ground, and made the introductory salaams of thanksgiving to the Prophet, while the coolie driver returned thanks to Rama.

The hills are left behind us; the plateau of Cashmere spreads as far as the eye can see, traversed by the glistening Jellum, that slowly rolling stream, spréading here and there into lakes.

Trees shut in the flat, interminable road, and it was midnight before we reached Srinagar, where I found, as a surprise, a comfortable house-boat with inlaid panels, and a fragrant fire of mango-wood smelling of orris-root.

The large town lies along the bank of the Jellum; the houses are of wood, grey and satiny with old age, and almost all tottering to their end on the strand unprotected by an embankment. The windows are latticed with bent wood in fanciful designs. Large houses built of brick have thrown out covered balconies and verandahs, supported on tall piles in the water, and on brackets carved to represent monsters or flowering creepers.

The ugliest of these palaces is that of the Maharajah, with galleries of varnished wood, of which the windows overlooking the river are filled with gaudy stained glass. In the garden is a pagoda painted in crude colours crowned with a gilt cupola; the zenana has bright red walls striped with green, and in the grounds there is a cottage exactly copied from a villa in the suburbs of London.

The muddy waters reflected the grey houses and the roofs of unbaked clay, on which the winter snows were melting in black trickling drops.

In the streets the people, all wrapped in long shawls of a neutral brown, were only distinguishable amid the all-pervading greyness by their white head-dress. Men and women alike wear the same costume—a full robe of dirty woollen stuff with

long hanging sleeves, and under this they are perfectly naked. The rich put on several such garments one over another; the poor shiver under a cotton wrapper. And all, even the children, look as if they had the most extraordinary deformed angular stomachs, quite low down — charcoal warmers that they carry next their skin under their robe.

At the bazaar we were positively hunted as customers; the clamour was harassing, and everything was displayed for sale in the open street, while the owner and his family crowded round us and hindered us from going a single step further.

Inside the shops everything was piled together. The same man is at once a banker, a maker of papier-mâché boxes—*papi-machi* they call it here —and of carpets, a goldsmith, tailor, upholsterer— and never lets you go till you have bought something.

The bargaining was interminable, something in this manner:—

"How much for this stuff?"

"You know it is *pashmina?*"

"Yes, I know. How much?"

"It is made at thirty-five, twenty, fifteen rupees."

"Yes. But how much is this?"

Then follows a long discussion in Hindi with the bystanders, who always escort a foreigner in a mob, ending in the question—

"Would you be willing to pay thirty-five rupees?"

"No."

"Then twenty-eight?"

And the figures go down after long discussions, till at last the question as to whether I know the worth of pashmina begins all over again—endless.

This morning, at Peshawur, down come the police on my houseboat—three of them—and their leader explains matters. Abibulla interprets.

I have no right to stay in Cashmere without the authorization of the Anglo-Indian Government, and ought to have handed such a permit to the police on arriving. I have none—no papers whatever.

The matter was evidently very serious. The three constables consulted together in an undertone, and then went off after desiring that I would forthwith telegraph to Sealkote and bring the reply to the police office.

Abibulla saw them off with great deference and a contrite air, and watched their retreat; then, as

I was about to send him to despatch the message, he was indignant. The police! What could they do to a sahib like me? It was all very well to frighten poor folks—it was a sin to waste money in asking for a reply which I should never be called upon to show—and so he went on, till I made up my mind to think no more of the matter. And whenever I met the chief at the bazaar or by the Jellum, he only asked after my health and my amusements.

So, after waiting for the reply of the gentleman whose business it was to give me this free pass, seeing that he could not make up his mind, I left the town without it.

At Srinagar you live under the impression that the scene before you is a panorama, painted to cheat the eye. In the foreground is the river; beyond it spreads the plain, shut in by the giant mountains, just so far away as to harmonize as a whole, while over their summits, in the perpetually pure air, hues fleet like kisses of colour, the faintest shades reflected on the snow in tints going from lilac through every shade of blue and pale rose down to dead white.

At the back of the shops, which lie lower than the street, we could see men trampling in vats all

day long; they were stamping and treading on old woollen shawls, fulling them to take off the shiny traces of wear, to sell them again as new goods.

"Export business!" says Abibulla.

On the sloping bank to the river stood a large wooden mosque falling into ruins. In front of this building was a plot full of tombstones, some overthrown, some still standing on the declivity.

In the evening, lamps shining out through latticed windows lighted the faithful in their pious gymnastics. A moollah's chant in the distance rose high overhead, and very shrill, and in the darkness the stars shed pale light on the tombstones mirrored in the black water; a plaintive flute softly carried on the sound of the priests' prayers. Down the dark streets the folk, walking barefoot without a sound, and wrapped in white, looked like ghosts.

Our boat stole slowly past the palaces, where there were no lights, through the haze rising from the river, and all things assumed a dissolving appearance as though they were about to vanish; all was shrouded and dim with mystery.

To-day a religious festival; from the earliest hour everybody had donned new clothes, and in the after-

noon in the bazaar there was a masquerade of the lowest class—embroidered dhotis, white robes, light-coloured turbans displaying large discs of green, red or blue. The men, even old men, ran after each other with bottles of coloured water, which they sprinkled far and near. One indeed had neither more nor less than a phial of violet ink, which, on the face and hands of a little black boy, shone with metallic lustre. One boy, in a clean garment, fled from a man who was a constant beggar from me, and who was pursuing him with some yellow fluid; and the fugitive was quite seriously blamed for disregarding the will of the gods and goddesses, whose festival it was.

Two days after, the people would burn in great state, on an enormous wood pile, an image of Time, to ensure the return next year of the festival of colours.

All day long in front of the houses the women were busy clumsily pounding grain with wooden pestles in a hollow made in a log; stamping much too hard with violent energy, they scattered much of the grain, which the half-tamed birds seized as they flew, almost under the women's hands. And then the wind carried away quite half the meal. But they pounded on all day for the birds and the

wind, and were quite happy so long as they could make a noise.

Two old women had a quarrel, and all the neighbourhood came out to look on.

Words and more words for an hour, till one of them stooping down took up a handful of sand and flung it to the earth again at her feet. The other, at this crowning insult, which, being interpreted, conveys, "There, that is how I treat you! like sand thrown down to be trodden on," covered her face with her sleeves and fled howling.

Two days later the roofs were covered with tulips of sheeny white and red, as light as feathers swaying on their slender stems; and the crowd, all in bright colours, went about in muslins in the clean, dry streets. Only a few very pious persons still wore the garments stained at the festival.

In the depths of a deserted temple in the bazaar, amid heaps of rags, bones, and colourless *debris*, dwelt an old man, a very highly venerated fakir, motionless in his den, while around him were gathered all the masterless dogs of Srinagar, who allowed no one to come near him and flew at anybody who tried to enter the temple.

At a goldsmith's I stood to watch a native making a silver box. He had no pattern, no design drawn on the surface, but he chased it with incredible confidence, and all his tools were shapeless iron pegs that looked like nails: first a circle round the box, and then letters and flowers outlined with a firm touch that bit into the metal. He had no bench, no shop—nothing. He sat at work on the threshold of his stall, would pause to chat or to look at something, and then, still talking, went on with his business, finishing it quite simply at once without any retouching.

In the coppersmiths' street was a booth that seemed to be a school of art, where little fellows of seven or eight were engraving platters and pots with the decision of practised craftsmen.

Some more small boys, a little way off, were doing embroidery, mingling gold thread and coloured silks in patterns on shawls. They were extremely fair, with long-shaped black eyes under their bright-hued pointed caps, and their dresses were gay and pretty, mingling with the glistening shades of silks and gold. And they were all chattering, laughing, and twittering as they worked, hardly needing the master's supervision.

A man by the roadside was mixing mud with

chopped straw; then when his mortar was of the right consistency he began to build the walls of his house between the four corner posts, with no tools but his hands. A woman and child helped him, patting the concrete with their hands until it began to look almost smooth.

We set out from Srinagar in an ekka, drawn at a trot by our only horse. The driver, perched on the shaft almost by his steed's side, dressed in green with an enormous pink pugaree, flogged and shouted incessantly. The monotonous landscape went on and on between the poplars that border the road, extending as far as the blue circle of distant Himalayas. The valley was green with the first growth of spring; as yet there were no flowers. And till evening fell, the same horizon shut us in with mountains that seemed to recede from us.

We stopped at a bungalow by a creek of the Jellum that was paved with broad lotus-leaves, among which the buds were already opening their pink hearts.

RAMPOOR

By three in the morning we had started on our way. At the very first streak of day, in front of us, on the road, was a snow-leopard, a graceful supple beast, with a sort of overcoat above its grey fur spotted with black, of very long, white hairs. It stood motionless, watching some prey, and it was not till we were close that it sprang from the road with two bounds, and then disappeared behind a rock with an elastic, indolent swing.

For our noonday rest I took shelter under a wood-carver's shed. On the ground was a large plank in which, with a clumsy chisel, he carved out circles, alternating with plane-leaves and palms. The shavings, fine as hairs, gleamed in the sun, and gave out a scent of violets. The man, dressed in white and a pink turban, with necklaces and bangles on his arms of bright brass, sang as he tapped with little blows, and seemed happy to be alive in the world. He gave us permission to sit in the shade of his stall, but scorned to converse with Abibulla.

A man went past in heavy, nailed shoes, wrapped in a flowing dhoti; he carried a long cane over his

left shoulder, and as he went he cried, "Soli, soli, aïa soli." All the dogs in the village crowded after him howling; and in the distance I saw that he was walking round and round two carriages without horses, still repeating "Soli, soli."

Last year he and his brother had gone into the mausoleum of a Moslem saint with their shoes on; both had gone mad. The other brother died in a madhouse, where he was cared for; this one, incurable but harmless, went about the highways, followed by the dogs.

When we left he was in a coppersmith's shop, singing with wide open, staring eyes; his face had a strangely sad expression while he sang a gay, jigging tune to foolish words that made the people laugh.

We met a native on horseback; a pink turban and a beard also pink, with a round patch of intensely black skin about his mouth—white hair dyed with henna to make it rose-colour; and a lock of hair that showed below his turban was a sort of light, dirty green in hue, like a wisp of hay. The rider, well mounted on his horse, was deeply contemptuous of us, sitting in an ekka—the vehicle of the vulgar; and he passed close to us

muttering an insult in his pink beard trimmed and combed into a fan.

On the river-bank were some eagles devouring a dead beast. One of them fluttered up, but came back to the carrion, recovering its balance with some difficulty, its body was so small for its large, heavy wings. Then they all rose together straight into the air with slow, broad wing-strokes, smaller and smaller, till they were motionless specks against the sky, and flew off to vanish amid the snowy peaks.

A forest in flower: Indian almond trees white, other trees yellow, a kind of magnolia with delicate pink blossoms; and among these hues like perfume, flew a cloud of birds, black, shot with glistening metallic green, and butterflies of polished bronze and dark gold flashed with blue, and others again sprinkled with white on the nacreous, orange-tinted wings.

Whenever our green driver meets another ekka-driver they both get off their perch and take a few puffs at the hookah that hangs in a bag at the back of the vehicle.

A smart affair altogether is this carriage! two very high wheels, no springs, a tiny cotton awning

supported on four sticks lacquered red, and sheltering the seat which has three ropes by way of a back to it. Portmanteaus and nosebags are hung all round, and even a kettle swings from the near shaft, adding the clatter of its cymbal to the Indian symphony of creaking wheels, the cracking whips, the driver's cries of "*Cello, cello,*" and Abibulla's repeated "*Djaldi,*" all intended to hurry the horse's pace.

DOMEL

A great crowd round the bungalow and along the road, and a mass of sepoys and police, made Abibulla remark:

"It must be the tax-collector to bring such a mob together."

But for once he was mistaken.

A tonga arrived just as we drove up, bringing an English official, travelling in his own carriage; gaiters, shooting jacket, a switch in his hand. He seated himself outside the bungalow in a cane chair, close by mine. Out of a case that was brought before him a hatchet and a pistol were unpacked, documentary evidence of the crime into which he was to inquire.

And then, under the verandah, the accused were brought up: an old man and a youth, father and son, both superbly handsome, very tall, erect, haughty, in spite of the hustling of the armed men and the heavy chains that weighed on them; and after bowing low to the judge they stood towering above the crowd of witnesses, soldiers, and native functionaries, in magnificent dignity and calm indifference.

Then, as it began to grow a little cool, the inquiry was continued indoors, whither the table was removed with the papers and the weapons, and, with great care, the magistrate's "soda." The two culprits were brought in and out, and in and out again, sometimes alone, sometimes to be confronted with the witnesses, who, almost all of them, had the fresh stains of the festival on their garments.

One of the police in charge had a whip, and when he was leading away the old man, holding his chain he "played horses" with him, to the great amusement of the bystanders, and even of the old fellow himself.

All round Domel there were fields of lilac lilies among the silky young grass, and the cliffs were

hung with a yellow eglantine exhaling a penetrating scent of almonds.

There was a large encampment round the bungalow that night: tents for the soldiers, and under the vehicles men sleeping on straw; others gathered round the fires, over which hung the cooking-pots, listening to a story-teller; and in a small hut of mud walls, with the door hanging loose, were the two prisoners with no light, watched by three dozing soldiers.

DERWAL

The road lay among flowers, all-pervading; in the fields, on the rocks, on the road itself, pink flowers or lavender or white; bright moss, shrubs and trees in full bloom, and hovering over them birds of changing hue and golden butterflies.

Towards evening came a storm of hail and snow, from which we took refuge in a government bungalow, where none but officials have a right to rest—but we stayed there all the same. The wind was quite a tornado, sweeping the flowers before it, and the pink and yellow blossoms were mingled with the snowflakes and the tender green leaves, scarcely

unfolded. Birds were carried past, helpless and screaming with terror. We could hear the beasts in a stable close by bellowing and struggling; and then, while the thunder never ceased, repeated by innumerable echoes, darkness fell, opaque and terrific, slashed by the constant flare of lightning, and the earth shook under the blast.

And then night, the real night, transparently blue and luminous with stars, appeared above the last cloud that vanished with the last clap of thunder. Unspeakable freshness and peace reigned over nature, and in the limpid air the mountain-chains, the giant Himalayas, extended to infinity in tones of amethyst and sapphire. Nearer to us, lights sparkled out in the innumerable huts built even to the verge of the eternal snows, on every spot of arable ground or half-starved grass land.

In the evening calm, the silence, broken only by the yelling of the jackals, weighed heavy on the spirit; and in spite of the twinkling lights and the village at our feet, an oppressive sense of loneliness, of aloofness and death, clutched me like a nightmare.

KOHAT

From Kusshalgar we were travelling in a tonga once more. The landscape was all of steep hills without vegetation; stretches of sand, hills of clay —lilac or rosy brick-earth scorched in the sun, green or brown earth where there had been recent landslips, baked by the summer heat to every shade of red. There was one hill higher than the rest, of a velvety rose-colour with very gentle undulations, and then a river-bed full of snowy-white sand, which was salt.

And from every stone, and in the rifts in the rocks, hung stalactites, like glittering icicles, and these too were of salt.

There was always the same torture of the horses, too small and too lean for their work, galloping the five miles of the stage and then stopping dead on the spot, incapable of moving, hustled by the fresh team that rushed off on its wild career.

At the end of the day one of the beasts could do no more. A shiver ran through the limbs of the poor thing, which, as soon as it was released from the shafts, lay down, a stream of blood staining the

pale sand; and in an instant, with a deep sigh, it was stiff in death.

The sun cast broad satin lights on its bay coat, already dry; the light hoofs, the pretty head with dilated nostrils gave the creature dignity—it looked like a thoroughbred, really noble in its last rest; while the vultures and kites hovered round, waiting for us to be gone.

BUNNOO

A plain of dried mud, dull grey, with scarcely a tinge of yellow in places; all round the horizon softly undulating hills which looked transparent, here a tender blue, there delicately pink, in flower-like hues. One of them, rising above all the eastern chain, might be a fortress, its towers alone left standing amid the general wreck. To the west the highest summits were lost in the blue of the sky, identically the same, but that the peaks were faintly outlined with a delicate line of snow.

As we reached Bunnoo green cornfields extended as far as the eye could see, under mulberry trees just unfolding their leaves. Numberless channels of water irrigated the land; the bed of the Kurrum

alone, quite white, was flecked here and there with blue pools, and was presently lost in the rosy distance of the hills on the Afghan frontier.

The natives here were an even finer race than those at Peshawur, and more uncultured, never bowing when we met them, but eyeing us as we passed as if they were meditating some foul blow.

And in the evening at mess—a dinner given in honour of a regiment marching through—news was brought in that close to Bunnoo, in the Kurrum valley, two travellers had been murdered in the night.

The dinner-table was covered with flowers—Maréchal Niel and Gloire de Dijon roses—but enormous, as big as saucers, and of such a texture, such a colour! a tissue of frost and light; and round the table, which was loaded with silver plate, were grey and red uniforms. Strains of music were wafted in through the open windows from the regimental band playing slow waltz-tunes a little way off.

As soon as dessert was removed two lieutenants got up, and seizing a couple of drums played away with all their might, while some other officers, under the pretext of dancing a Highland fling, cut the most amazing capers. When the band had left

the fun went on to the sound of the banjo, lasting late into the cool night, all in the highest spirits.

When I went away home to the fort, where I was living with my friend Lieutenant F——, the sentinel's challenge, the tall grey walls casting sharp shadows on the courtyard silvered with moonlight, and another sentry's cry; and still, in contrast with the cheerful evening, I could remember nothing but the tonga post-horse—a thing so frequent in this land of fanatics, so common that no one gives it more than a passing thought.

Before daybreak, before the *réveillée*, the moollah's prayer roused the Sikhs, of which two regiments were quartered in the fort; and till it was broad daylight, till the sun had chased away shadows and sadness, I still felt the melancholy, the twilight sense of uneasiness left by that slow and plaintive chant.

In the afternoon the soldiers tilted on horseback, four on a side. They tried to unhorse each other; two or three would attack one, succeeding at last in rolling him off under his charger, while they in their turn were attacked by others, ending in a *mêlée*, where the victors and the vanquished left fragments of their thin shirts.

Then there were races of baggage-mules, and competitions of speed in harnessing horses and in striking the tents. Finally the English officers rode a race, and then the prizes were distributed—money to the men and blue pugarees with gold thread to the native officers.

In the middle of the course was a stand, and there, with the officers and civil functionaries, were four English ladies who had accompanied their husbands to this remote station. They thought of their dress and took care of their babies, living among these Sikhs whom the native priests are perpetually inciting to rebellion, and seeming to have not the least fear of danger.

When the road was made through Bunnoo a pile of stones was heaped up in the middle of the village. The Moslems finally persuaded themselves that this was a saint's grave; and they come hither to perform their devotions, planting round it bamboo flagstaffs with pennons, and adding to the mound the stones they piously bring to it day by day.

The heat to-day has suddenly become stifling; the low clouds veil the colourless sun, and the flowers, which yesterday were still lovely, are now

withered and pallid, and only give out their scent in the evening, when it is cool again.

Two more murders; one a squalid business with no motive—a man killed as he was on his way to gather his rice-harvest. Sixteen hill-men attacked him at once, riddling the body with bullets.

The other victim, the night watchman of a neighbouring village, was suspected of treachery towards the hill-tribes in a recent skirmish. One ball through the head had killed him, and his arms had been cut off.

At the polo-match in the evening the band played, and three ladies were present; in sign of the spring having come, a basket was hung to the branch of a tree, full of straw kept constantly wet by the coolies, and containing sundry bottles of soda-water.

Next day was kept as the spring festival. Every man had a rose stuck into his turban, and a shirt embroidered in gold on the shoulders and breast. The women appeared in stiff and gaudy veil cloths, bedizened with trumpery jewellery. Everybody was gay; a little excited towards evening by arrack, and dancing, and singing to the eternal tom-toms. Even the fiercest men from the hills, with black

turbans and enormously full calico trousers that once were white, and shirts embroidered in bright silks, had set aside their ferocious looks and stuck roses in their pugarees, smiling at those they met.

At mess there were two newly-arrived officers, come from Tochi; they had been attacked on the road in the night by sixteen men. The driver and the horse were killed; they themselves had not a scratch, and they told the story very much at their ease, relating the comic features of the incident—how a bullet had lodged itself in a pot hanging to a mule's pack, and the frightened creature had kicked "like mad."

After sunset, in every garden, on every hedge, wherever there had been a scrap of shade during the afternoon, there was a perfect burst of flowers, opening in the cooler air and scenting the night. Round one bungalow the rose trees, overloaded with flowers, hardly had a leaf, and in the grass, violet and lavender larkspurs grew as tall as maize plants. Yellow stars gleamed in the tangle of creepers over the verandahs, and on a tree that looked as if it were dead blossoms glistened in the moonlight like polished steel.

In the plain the sowars were performing an

Indian fantasia. Charging at a gallop, their wide sleeves flying behind them, they swept past like a whirlwind, aiming with their lances at a peg of wood stuck into the ground. Whenever it was speared there were frantic shouts and applause from a crowd of spectators, packed in the best places. In a cloud of dust, growing steadily thicker and hanging motionless over the riders, the performance went on, its centre always this same peg of wood, replaced again and again, exciting the enthusiasm of connoisseurs till the last ray of light died away.

The natives, to keep their money safe—it is always in coin, never in paper, which is not much trusted in these parts—either bury it or have it wrought into trinkets, worn by the women and children. Quite little ones of five or six, and perfectly naked, have round their neck sometimes three or four strings of gold pieces, or pierced silver rods as thick as a finger—and then one evening the child does not come home, and in some dark corner the poor little body is found bleeding, the jewels gone.

A Sikh, an old soldier, not long since bought a few acres of land; to pay for it he produced 800

rupees in silver, and on his wives, whom he brought with him, were 3000 rupees' worth of jewels.

A little study of manners, as related to me by my neighbour at dinner :—

A native judge is sitting cross-legged on a little mat in his house. A petitioner appears of the lowest caste, a *Sudra*. The judge, quite motionless, watches the man unfasten his sandals, rush up to him, and with a profound bow touch his feet in sign of submission. For a man of higher caste, a *Vaysiya*, the ceremonial is the same, only instead of running forward the visitor walks up to the judge and merely pretends to touch his slippers. Then comes a kshatriya advancing very slowly; the judge rises to meet him half-way, and they both bow.

In the case of a Brahmin it is the judge who hurries to the threshold, and affects to touch the priest's feet.

Colonel C—— went out shooting wild duck on a pool close to Bunnoo with a native, whose horse, led by a servant, came after them. But when they came to the native gentleman's village he mounted, and returned the civility of the salaaming people, who till then had avoided recognizing him, regard-

ing the fact that a kshatriya had come on foot as sufficient evidence that he wished to pass incognito. Then, when they were out of the village, the native gentleman dismounted and walked on with the colonel.

When a Sikh is beaten and surrenders he takes off his turban and lays it at the conqueror's feet, to convey that with the turban he also offers his head.

When a native comes to ask a favour he brings a few rupees in his hand, and the patron must take them and hold them a few minutes. A retired Sikh trooper had come to see his son, now a soldier in the regiment, and met the colonel, who asked him whether he could do anything for him, to which the other replied:

"Can you suppose I should have insulted you by coming here without asking you some favour?"

The want of foresight in the people here is amazing. A servant earning five rupees a month got his son married, a child of fifteen, and for this event he bought fireworks on credit, and at enormous interest, which would cost him three years' wages.

"How do you expect to pay?" asked his master, an officer.

"I shall pay as much as I can myself, and by-and-by my son will earn money, and we shall pay between us."

The highest peak of the chain that overlooks Bunnoo looks like the ruins of a fortress. A legend, which must have had its origin at some time when a man-eating tiger lurked in the neighbourhood, relates that it is the lair of a ferocious ogre always on the look-out for prey. Nothing on earth would induce any of the natives to go up the mountain; nay, for a long distance even the plain is not too safe.

All the men carry fighting quails in little cages made of a net stretched over a wooden tray and cone-shaped at top. Towards evening, in the shade of the houses, at the street corners, in the court-yards—everywhere, there is a group betting on the chances of a fight. The birds taken out of the cages at first turn slowly round each other, their beaks close together. Then a spring, a flutter of wings and flying feathers; the quails strike and peck, aiming at the head, and then suddenly they seem quite indifferent and turn round and round again, picking up grain from the ground. When a

bird is killed at the end of a battle, its eyes blinded and its breast torn open, it is considered a fine, a noble spectacle, and amateurs will talk of it for a long time. As a rule, after a few rounds one of the birds tries to get away. Then its owner pricks its neck with a knife, and the gasping creature dies slowly in the dust, the blood oozing drop by drop.

A very good quail that is often the victor, is worth eight or ten rupees. At a funeral a day or two since one of the bearers had his quail in a cage hanging from his girdle—a champion bird he would not part from.

A man in the fort always struck out the hours on a gong, very slowly, in the heat of the day. Twelve at noon was interminable—one, two, three were so feeble as to be scarcely audible. And then when it was cooler and the tom-toms could be heard in the distance, the strokes had a queer dislocated rhythm, and sometimes even a stroke too many, smothered in a hurried roll.

The sweepers, the saises, the bearers, the whole tribe of noisy, idle servants — men, women, and children—all sleep out of doors in the hotter weather. And all day long the camp-bed, the two mats, and half a dozen pots, which constitute the

whole furniture of a family, move round the house with the shade, only settling down after dark.

The moon at night shed an intense light, warm and golden. There was scarcely any shadow, and in the quivering atmosphere the flowers poured out their perfume on the cooler air. Frogs croaked a *basso continuo* to cries of night birds, and a sort of roar, very loud but very distant, almost drowned the concert in the fort close by.

White clouds grew opalescent against the deep, infinite, blue-velvet sky, and their edges next the moon were fringed with silver. The stars, of a luminous pale green like aqua marine, seemed dead and had no twinkle.

Then, another day, the air was leaden, too heavy to breathe. The mountains of the gem-like hues had lost their glory; they were of one flat tone of dusky grey, and further away were lost to view, invisible in the dead monotony of the colourless sky. The silence was oppressive; there was not a bird in the air, and a strange uneasiness scared the beasts, all seeking a shady refuge.

Music in the evening, in the gardens which surround the library, the chapel, and the tennis

courts. The ladies' dresses and the uniforms were lustrous in the moonlight. First we had the regimental band, and then songs to a banjo accompaniment; and all about us in the tall trees, the minahs and parrots shrieking as if it were broad daylight, finished the concert by themselves. A huge creeper, swaying between two branches, hung like a curtain of yellow flowers embroidered, as it seemed, on the airy tangle of leaves.

Gauze and muslin dresses moved gracefully about against the background of bamboos and roses. Light footsteps scarcely bent the grass; the ripple of talk, with its sprinkling of Indian words, was sweet and musical. Fireflies whirled above the plants making little tendrils of light; there was dreaminess in the air—an anticipation of fairyland to which the music seemed the prelude.

And to and fro on the ramparts, the sentry, in an uniform of the same hue as the sun-baked bricks, paced his beat, invisible but for a needle of light on his fixed bayonet; till when crossing a patch of light he was seen like an apparition, lost again in the shadow of the wall.

KOHAT

A station on the road—the delightful days at Bunnoo left far behind.

The night was spent in travelling: an oppressive night of crushing heat, with leaden clouds on the very top of us; and next day, in the blazing sunlight, nothing seemed to have any colour—everything was white and hot against a blue-black sky that seemed low enough to rest on the earth. Wayfarers slept under every tree, and in the villages every place was shut, everything seemed dead. It was only where we changed horses that we saw anyone—people who disappeared again immediately under shelter from the sun.

Very early in the morning we met a many-coloured caravan of men, women, and children riding astride on asses, amid baskets and bundles. They were on their way to a wedding: they had stopped to rest for the last time; and alone, far from the merry, noisy group, a "bad woman" sat down on a stone. She was on the way to the same festival, and was allowed to travel with the

caravan for succour in case of need; but she was not permitted to join the party.

Towards evening the sky turned to a dull, dark green, and in the sudden gloom down came the rain in floods, tremendous, solid, for about five minutes; then as suddenly it was as hot as ever again, dry and overpowering.

Seen through the blue glass under the low, broad carapace that covered thé carriage, the landscape circled past, the colour hardly subdued to that of Europe; even in the dusk, with the windows open, everything was still intolerably, crudely white, with reflections of fiery gold. Everything vibrated in the heat, and at the stations the walls after baking all day scorched you when you went near.

About Lahore, all among the ruined temples, the crumbling heaps of light red bricks sparkling with mica, there were fields of roses in blossom and of ripe corn. Naked coolies were labouring in the fields, gathering the ears one by one into quite small bunches; they looked like children playing at harvesting.

DEHRA DOON

Amid the cool rush of a myriad streams is a garden, the loveliest in the world; the broad paths are shaded by cedars, banyans, palms, and crotons with purple and orange leaves. Under the garlands of gorgeous flowered climbers are hedges of roses of every shade, and shrubs starred with lavender and blue. In the ditches, above the water-plants strewn with petals like hoar-frost, grows a carpet of pale lilac cineraria.

The horizon is the Himalaya range; the slopes are covered with the ribbed velvet of the tea plantations, and on one hill stand the scattered bungalows of Mussoree, looking no bigger than pebbles.

My friend Captain McT——, with whom I stayed, had a house with a peaked, reed-thatched roof. Round the verandah where we slept at night hung festoons of jasmine and bougainvillea. Bamboos, phœnix, and curtains of creepers at the end of the lawn made a wall of verdure, fresh and cool; and through this were wafted the perfumes shed on the air—the scent of roses and verbena, of violet

or of rosemary, according to the side whence the wind blew, mingling with that of the amaryllis and honeysuckle in bloom close at hand, And in this quiet garden, far from the bazaar where the darboukhas were twanging, birds sang all night, and the fireflies danced in mazes from flower to flower.

Captain McT——'s orderly appeared as soon as we stirred in the morning, shouldering arms—the "arm" an umbrella which the authorities allow as a privilege off duty to the Ghoorkhas, men from the high plateaux, who are very sensitive to sun-stroke, and who wear only a cap without a pugaree. The umbrella solemnly resting against his right shoulder, this worthy stood at attention, serious and motionless, and very upright—a quaint figure, his age impossible to guess, with his Mongolian face, his little slits of eyes, and his figure, in spite of his military squareness, rather too pliant in the yellow khaki uniform.

We visited a temple where the natives treasure the couch of the Guru Ram-Roy, a very holy and much venerated fakir.

Every year pilgrims set up the tallest tree from the neighbouring jungle in front of the sanctuary, and twist round it an enormous red flag. The

mast now standing was at least a hundred feet high, and held in place by guys attached to banyan trees and houses standing near. Close to the ground ties of coloured worsted, the offerings of the faithful, held the crimson hanging to the pole.

The front of the temple is covered with paintings. Decorations in the Persian style divide the panels, on which are depicted the principal scenes from the sacred books of the Brahmins. There are two perfect things to be seen here: two nude female figures standing, one white, the other brown, exquisitely refined in colouring, admirably drawn in a style reminding me of early Italian art; and then, just beyond these, tasteless imitations of chromos—goddesses with eyes too large and a simper like the advertisements of tooth-paste, and some horrible caricatures of English ladies in the fashion of ten years ago holding parasols like a nimbus.

And certainly the most comical of all is the representation of a baboo donor, to whom two servants, prostrate before him, are offering a glass of water.

To the right of the forecourt is the high priest's room; lustres, glass shades, gilt chairs, coloured photographs, incongruously surrounding an antique silk carpet, soiled and stained.

At the end of the court, over which enormous bread-fruit trees cast a cool shade, above some steps and a marble terrace where some musicians were performing, stands the holy spot which we dared not go near. In the dim light we could see a square object, red embroidered in gold—the couch of Ram-Roy—and hanging to the wall a silver curtain. All this, though perhaps it is but tinsel, looked at a distance and in the shadow like brocade and magnificent jewels. Round the main building there are four kiosks dedicated to the Guru's four wives.

The guardian fakirs who watch the sacred flag sat under a tree in front of the temple. One of these, quite young, was beautiful beyond words. He had taken a vow always to stand. Leaning on a long pole he rocked himself without ceasing; for an instant he allowed his rapt eyes to rest on the bystanders, and then looked up again at the plume of white horse-hair that crowns the flagstaff. His legs were rather wide apart and evidently stiff; he walked without bending his knees, and then as soon as he stood still he rested his chin on his long cane, and swayed his body as before.

A tea plantation—a garden of large shrubs pruned

in such a way as to secure the greatest possible growth of young shoots, and above the delicate tea plants a shady hedge of fan palms and taller trees. The leaves are gathered by day, spread in the evening on hurdles and left for the night in open sheds. On the morrow they are first thrown into a sort of bottomless square funnel which revolves on a board; rolled and broken in this machine they are ready for drying. The tea passes through twenty grades of increasing temperature, and in drying it gives out the most delightful aroma—a mixture of sweetbriar, seaweed, and violets, with a scent of tea too. The leaves are finally sifted, which sorts them in four sizes into boxes containing the different qualities.

Coolies in white turbans were busy round the machines. They are very skilful, but work with determined slowness as a mute rebellion against the humiliating coercion of obeying a thing of wood and iron, and above all of obeying it without stopping, for the ideal of every Hindoo is to do nothing. And this rose to positive martyrdom when, in the absence of our own servants, who were nowhere to be found, one of these craftsmen, a Brahmin, strictly forbidden by his religion ever to touch the food of the disbelievers, or even the

vessels they use, was obliged to make tea for us. Looking utterly miserable, the poor fellow weighed out the leaves, put them into little antique earthenware pots, and poured on the boiling water. A sand-glass marked how long the infusion was to stand. He even brought us some pretty little crackle basins that looked as if they had come out of some old-world convent pharmacy; but the poor man could not bring himself to pour the tea out —he fled.

Close to a field that had just been reaped four oxen yoked abreast were threshing out the grain, tramping round and round on a large sheet spread on the ground. The driver chanted a shrill, slow tune; further away women in red were gleaning, and a patriarch contemplated his estate, enthroned on a cart in a halo of sunset gold.

The Ghoorkhas, small men and very active, young too, with Chinese features, were practising gymnastics. And recruits were being drilled, two of them barefoot, though wearing their gaiters.

Firmly erect in military attitudes, they moved like one man. All without exception turn out capital soldiers.

The drill sergeant shouts the word of command in wonderful English—*lept*, meaning left.

This native regiment, after many victories, was presented by the Empress Queen with a sort of mace. A little shrine contains two crossed knives, and is surmounted by three Ghoorkhas bearing a royal crown in silver. This object is preserved in a case in the ammunition store. An officer is appointed to guard it, and the soldier who took it out to show me touched it really as if it had been the Host. And it is a fact that on high festivals the soldiers come to sacrifice goats before the house where this fetish is treasured.

After dinner, with the dessert, the head orderly of the mess marched in with the decanters. He set them on the table, and then stood immovable at his post behind the colonel's chair, shouldering his gun till everybody had done, when he carried off the bottles with the same air of being on parade.

Outside, under a thatched screen, sits the punkah coolie, his legs crossed, the string in his hand; and as soon as everyone goes into the room he wakes up, rocks his body to and fro, his arm out in a fixed position, swaying all of a piece with a mechanical see-saw, utterly stupid. He will go to sleep lulled by his own rocking, and never wake unless the cord breaks, or somebody stops him.

HARDWAR

At the bottom of a wide flight of steps flows the Ganges, translucent, deeply green, spangled with gold. The bathers, holding the little brass pots that they use for their ablutions, are performing the rites, surrounded by large yellow fishes spotted with green. Pink and white stuffs are spread to dry on the steps, flowers are scattered on the stream, long wreaths are floating down the river, curling and uncurling at the caprice of the current.

After bathing, during their long prayers to the gods of the river, almost as sacred here as it is at Benares, the pilgrims threw grain to the half-tame fish. Steering vigorously with their tails, the creatures turned and rolled, making eddies of light in the water, and hurrying up to the falling grain occasionally upset the equilibrium of some old woman still taking her bath. At the top of the bank, in the blazing sunshine, two fakirs, squatting in the dusty road, remained unmoved by all this turmoil, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, absorbed in a fixed thought which concentrated their gaze

on an invisible point. The fall of an old woman into the Ganges, with all the shouting that such an incident entails in India, left them quite indifferent; they did not stir, did not even glance at the river as the woman was taken out unconscious.

There are temples all along the shore, poor little structures for the most part. On the walls gaudy borders of crude colour serve to frame chromo-lithographs representing the principal events of the Vedas. There are but one or two sanctuaries built of marble, and very rarely have the idols any precious jewels.

Beyond the temples is the merchants' quarter: a few very modest shops, the goods covered with dust; and in the middle of this bazaar, a cord stretched across cut off a part of the town where cholera was raging.

In the plain, beyond shady avenues of tamarind and *terminalia* trees, Hardwar begins again, a second town of large buildings, buried in the greenery of banyans and bamboos. Here again was the ghost of a bazaar, where all seemed dead under the bleaching sun—a bazaar bereft of sellers, no one in the booths, and no buyers in the deserted streets.

At every street-corner there were blocks of salt,

which the cows and goats licked as they went past.

On our way back through the temple-quarter a sudden wild excitement possessed the worshippers and priests; out of a side street rushed a large troop of monkeys, grey, with black faces. They galloped past in a close pack and fled to the trees, shrieking shrilly. One, however, lagged behind, bent on stealing some rice that had been brought as an offering to a plaster image of Vishnu. A Brahmin stood watching the monkey, and tried to scare it away with a display of threatening arms, but he dared not hit the beast sacred to Hanuman, the god of the green face. The creature, never stirring from the spot, yelled aloud, bringing the rest of the pack back on to the roof of the neighbouring pagodas. Then the ringleader, with a subdued, sleepy, innocent gait, stole gently up to the tray of offerings. He was on the point of reaching it when the priest raised his arm. This was a signal for the whole tribe to scream and dance with terror, but without retreating. The performance seemed likely to last; the bazaar and the temples were in a hubbub of excitement; the doors of the shops and the sanctuaries were hastily shut, till, at the mere sight of a man who came out

with a long bamboo in his hand, the whole pack made off and appeared no more, and Hardwar relapsed into its somnolent sanctity.

DELHI

In the train to Delhi the windows were screened with cuscus mats constantly sprinkled with water, and so long as the train was in motion the air came in cool, fragrant, and breathable. But whenever we stopped in the desert which this country becomes just before the monsoon, melted lead seemed to scorch up the atmosphere and shut the train in between walls of fire.

Delhi appeared in the blinding light like an unsubstantial vision, white against a bleached sky; and as we got nearer the city half vanished like a mirage, blotted out and dim through a shifting cloud of dust.

Every house in the town was shuttered, not a soul was to be seen in the baked streets; only here and there in a shady corner a beggar might be seen asleep. A *chigram* only was slowly moving along at the slow pace of two draught oxen, carrying the women of a zenana, and their constant chatter

within the curtains of the clumsy vehicle sounded formidably loud and discordant in the silence, the death-like exhaustion of noon. A foxy smell came up from everything that the sun was baking, and towards the end of the day it had become intolerable, corpse-like. It died away, however, after sunset.

Then, in the magic of the evening, the air was saturated with fragrance; invisible gardenias, amaryllis, and lemon-flowers perfumed the cool night. On every side we could hear the quavering guzla, the sound of tom-toms and tambourines. The streets were brightly lighted up and crowded.

A dancing-girl went by, wrapped in white muslin as thin as air, hardly veiling the exquisite grace of her shape. Close to us, in front of two musicians playing on the vina and the tom-tom, she began to dance, jingling the rattles and bells on her anklets: a mysterious dance with slow movements and long bows alternating with sudden leaps, her hands crossed on her heart, in a lightning flash of silver necklets and bangles. Every now and then a shadow passed between the nautch-girl and the lights that fell on her while she was dancing, and then she could scarcely be seen to touch the ground, she seemed to float in her fluttering

drapery; and presently, before the musicians had ceased playing, she vanished in the gloom of a side alley. She had asked for nothing, had danced simply for the pleasure of displaying her grace.

On our way back to the hotel, in a park through which we had to pass, we suddenly heard overhead a shrill outcry proceeding from a banyan tree to which a number of vampires had hung themselves up. Clinging together side by side, like black rags, and hardly visible in the thick foliage, the creatures formed a sort of living bunch, creeping, swaying, and all uttering the same harsh, monotonous, incessant cry.

As we passed the sacred tanks, where a smell of decay filled the air that still rang with the cries of the bats, our horses suddenly shied and refused to go forward, terror-stricken by some invisible danger suggested to them by that reiterated shriek or the corpse-like smell. A very long minute passed as we sat in the carriage, a minute of dread that left us quite excited by this mysterious peril of which we had somehow felt the awe. Nor was it till we had left the great trees by the tanks behind us that the impression wore off under the comforting light of the stars.

With day came the grip of fire, the overwhelming

mastery of the heat. The sunshine pierced through every crack in the shutters and blinds, intolerably vivid. In feverish exhaustion, helpless to withstand the glow and light, we could but lie under the waving punkah and await the blessed return of night.

BOMBAY

A tea-party in the afternoon at the yacht club. The ladies in smart dresses, the talk all of fashionable gossip—how far away from all I had been seeing. An European atmosphere, where a touch of local colour was only suggested by the native servants. The plague, the ruling terror when I was last in Bombay, was forgotten; the only subject now was the Jubilee, and the latest news from England arrived by that day's mail.

In the evening, on my way to dine with a friend by Malabar Hill, I could hardly recognize some parts of the town: houses, a camp of little huts and tents, a whole district had been swept away. A wide open space covered with rubbish heaps was to be seen where the sepoys' barracks had been, and where from the first the men had died of the plague by hundreds. In one garden, a bungalow where a

man had just died was being burnt down — still burning. A party of police were encouraging the fire, and a cordon of native soldiers kept everybody else off.

A heavy, rusty-red cloud hung over the field of Hindoo funeral fires. Tambourines and bells could be heard in the distance, and as we went nearer the noise grew louder in the foul air, stifling and stagnant; till when we got close to the place the noise and singing were frantic and the smell of burning was acrid, sickening.

But at Byculla, in Grant Road, the street of gambling-houses, there was a glare of lights; gaudy lanterns were displayed at the windows where spangles and tinsel trinkets glittered. And then, between two brightly illuminated houses where every window was wide open, there was the dark gap of a closed house, in front of it a pan of sulphur burning. The green and purple flame flickered grimly on the faces of the passers-by, making their dhotis look like shrouds wrapping spectres.

In the side streets the natives lay sleeping on the bare earth in the coolness of night. On every house were the spots of red paint that told how many of the inhabitants had died of the plague;

and the smaller the house the closer were the dabs of paint, almost framing the door with a chain of red spots.

A funeral came pushing past me in the silence of this sleeping district: the body, wrapped in red, hung from a bamboo that rested on the bearers' shoulders. No one followed him, and the group disappeared at once in the deep gloom of the narrow alley.

I turned back into Grant Road, where bands of tom-toms and harmoniums were hard at it, where the gamblers were stifling each other round the roulette-boards in a frenzy of amusement and high spirits, eager for enjoyment before hovering death should swoop down on them.

In a quiet, darkened corner a girl was lying on a bier, a girl of the Brahmin caste, all in white, veiled by a transparent saree. By her side an old man, a bearded patriarch, seemed to wait for someone. Then another Brahmin came out from a little house, carrying the fire wherewith to light the funeral pile in a little pot hanging from his girdle. The two old men took up their burthen—so light that even to them, tottering already towards their end, it seemed to be no weight. They made their way cautiously, so as not to tread on the sleep-

ing figures strewn about the street, going very slowly in devious zigzags. A dog woke and howled at them; and then, as silence fell, I could hear again the dying sounds of harmoniums and tom-toms, and the clatter of the games.

AT SEA

Bombay, towering above the sea in a golden glory —the tall towers and minarets standing out in sharp outline against the sky, splendid in colour and glow. Far away Malabar Hill and a white speck—the Towers of Silence; Elephanta, like a transparent gem, reflected in the aqua-marine-coloured water.

A rosy light flooded the whole scene with fiery radiance, and then suddenly, with no twilight, darkness blotted out the shape of things, drowning all in purple haze; and there, where India had vanished, a white mist rose from the ocean that mirrored the stars.

THE END.

PLYMOUTH:
WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON,
PRINTERS.

00056672

Digitized with financial assistance from
Hemendra Kothari
on 06 November, 2019